

## Chapter 161 - The Vampire's Servant

[Victor]

It was Sunday evening and we were preparing for dinner at the home of Grayson's parents. I was slightly nervous. It had been ages since I was invited to a dinner with living beings and the first time ever with werewolves.

Sean and Rosario had returned to the house on Friday. Echo was relieved to have them back and made sure to apologize profusely. She was still rather embarrassed at what she'd done in the hold of the curse.

Echo, Grayson, and I had resumed laying together. I would go into her room with them at night and we would be together until they were sleeping. Our bond was growing even deeper.

We made the plan to mark Echo as soon as possible. We'd been waiting on their graduation, but it appeared the gowns would cover any mark we gave her. She wanted to be marked before we tackled the next part of the curse.

She said not being marked had been one of the things that made her feel less safe in the hold of the curse. Considering that it was one of the things I had focused on as well, we felt it was a good idea. If a server hadn't called in last night, requiring Grayson to go fill in for them, we would have done it then.

As it stood, tonight was when we were planning it. We let Valor and Harmony know so they wouldn't grow concerned when they saw the marks. Harmony revealed that she had been marked by Cameron the night after we'd been freed.

I had wondered at her suddenly conservative clothing. Valor didn't seem to be too pleased, but he understood. Marking would make the bond stronger for Cameron and Harmony and they would be stronger for it as well.

Marking would lend the strength of each mate to the other, at least, once the bond was sealed. After our bond was sealed, Echo would be stronger and faster. She would gain the strength of a vampire who was nearly nine hundred years old. It would pair well with all of her abilities.

Amelia came into the entryway. She smiled at me and nodded before heading toward the library. Finn came past, but ignored me.

It had been like this for the past few days. He was basically her shadow. When she would acknowledge him, he would try to talk to her about what it meant to be someone's Solus Amor. He would tell her about the good he tried to do and the adventures he wanted to take her on.

I could see that she was coming around to it. Emmalyn and Talia were helping. I figured I had done enough and didn't try anything.

My intention hadn't been to harm my broodmate. I had no idea that he hadn't told Amelia that she was his Solus Amor. With how excited he had to have been, with the way he talked to her in the cells, I honestly thought he had told her.

It was an honest mistake. That didn't make me feel much better. I had embarrassed myself pretty thoroughly.

"I think I'm getting better at reading you. Stop pouting." Grayson said.

I raised my eyebrow at him. "I do not pout."

"Brooding, then. Whatever vampires do when they're actually pouty." He chuckled.

"You're quite lucky that I'm growing to like you, Grayson. Or I would take offense at that." I replied.

"And do what? Pout more?" Grayson snickered. "I'm just messing with you, Victor. You need to get that sorry expression off your face, though, or Echo's going to get upset. She wants you to be happy about going to see my family."

"Is my clothing appropriate for this sort of gathering?" I asked.

"I mean, you look fine. I would have gone a little more relaxed, but this is the first time I've seen you in jeans instead of slacks or dress pants, so it's progress. Don't worry, man. Everyone is excited to meet you... except my grandpa. He doesn't like vampires, though, so we don't really count him." He replied.

Echo came into the entryway from the kitchen. Lisa insisted on watching her in the kitchen after she found out what Echo had done to everyone last weekend. Echo accepted it with no complaint.

Part of me was worried that she was still punishing herself for what she'd done. Echo was a little more skittish than she'd been before. Talia assured us that it was just Echo's mind trying to process what the curse was trying to do to her.

She held up a cooler and smiled. "I have the food for Victor."

"Great, angel. We should get going. Everyone will be waiting for us." Grayson said.

We went out to my car. Grayson offered to drive, but I wanted to be in control of where we were going. It had been a while since the last time I drove.

Grayson chattered on about his family as we drove. Echo would add in things she remembered of them in previous meetings. They were talking so excitedly that I caught myself smiling.

Maybe we were all meant to be together like this so they could remind me to enjoy life. I hadn't really done that. In all the years I'd lived, I had merely survived and existed. My only joy was in knowing I was providing a safe place for humans in my territory to grow up. I knew no one would suffer as I had.

When we arrived, there were teens and children sitting out on the front yard who started jumping up and running around when they saw us pull up. Grayson helped Echo out of the backseat of the car as I walked around the front.

Some teens rushed up, but stopped a few feet away. They looked at me nervously as they talked to Grayson. Echo came over and took my hand. She smiled up at me and I relaxed a little more.

Echo introduced me to Grayson's younger cousins. They all kept their distance until a little girl of no more than six came up to us. She looked at me quizzically, then took my other hand.

"C'mon. We're hungry." She demanded.

I chuckled and followed her across the yard. The other children were all frozen, watching her pull me around. Echo stayed by my side, while Grayson followed behind.

The little girl had the same dark hair and brown eyes that Grayson had. She smelled like a relative, but that was to be expected at a family affair. She was most definitely the child of an Alpha. I wondered if this was one of Trent's daughters.

She opened the door and pulled me through. She took me through the house and out the back door. Adults were milling around a little, but turned to look at us as we came onto the porch.

"This is Gray's vampire. Be nice." The girl ordered.

The adults chuckled. Trent approached and ruffled her hair.

"I see you met our little sister. Eden, why don't you go get the other kids?" He said to the girl.

"Okay!" She cheered and let go of me before racing off.

"She likes you, Master Nightshade." Trent winked.

"She's a very forceful little girl. I bet she'll dominate her mate when she grows up." I chuckled.

“We’re hopeful that her mate is an omega so that won’t cause her too much difficulty.” An older woman said with a smile. “I’m Grayson’s mother, Elise Padua. You can just call me Elise.”

“Please call me Victor, especially you, Trent. We’re not leaders in this situation, we’re… family.” I replied.

“Of course we’re family, Victor. You’re like a brother to me, but I actually like you.” Grayson laughed.

“You’ll pay for that, Gray.” Trent growled playfully.

“I’ve been training to fight with vampires for the last few weeks. I think you’ll have a hard time beating me now.”

“No fighting.” Elise scolded.

“Sorry, mom.” Both boys chorused.

“Please, come sit down, Victor. The children are all hungry. We can talk as soon as we get them fed.” She smiled.

I bowed and followed her to the seat she wanted me in. Echo went into the kitchen to prepare my plate while the women started taking plates full of food to the tables that dotted the yard. Grayson sat next to me and introduced me to everyone who was at the tables.

His grandfather sneered and turned away from me. They had already warned me that he didn’t like vampires, but it didn’t bother me too much. I was used to being hated and feared. It was the way the others were friendly and accepting that really threw me off.

“You don’t look much older than Trent or William.” Landon, Grayson’s father, said.

“I was twenty-six when I died.” I replied.

“That’s a pretty young age to decide you’re done with being human.” Martin scoffed.

“I was killed by a werewolf.” I stated firmly. “My sire found me mere moments before I would have succumbed to my injuries.”

The silence which came over the table was heavy. I could see they were mindlinking each other. Grayson put a hand on my shoulder.

“You never told me that.” He whispered.

“It’s why I’ve never been fond of them, but werewolves are growing on me quickly. Echo has taught me that you cannot blame a whole species for what an individual did. If she were like me, she wouldn’t have ever learned to trust me.” I admitted.

As if she were summoned by speaking of her, Echo came out and set a plate in front of me. She sat between Grayson and I. We put food onto the plate in front of her before Grayson served himself.

During the meal, I answered questions and gained more information about the pack. Having so many generations of Alphas there was interesting. They talked to me about issues they'd had in the past.

I learned about hunter attacks, rogue attacks, and even vampire attacks, that the pack had successfully fended off. I promised that any rogue vampires would be dealt with immediately. They seemed pleased.

The ladies talked about the wedding they were planning. They asked about any vampire traditions they should be aware of. We didn't have many. Most vampires didn't actually have weddings.

Once marriage bonds were made, they put in the paperwork to the council. If it were a pair of Solus Amors, they would sometimes hold a celebration with their allies and closest friends. There was a binding ceremony.

"In a binding ceremony, we make our own vows to our Solus Amor. It isn't quite the same. There is no one who officiates. Our vows are for protection and companionship, rarely love." I told them.

"Why not love?" Elise asked.

"Because it's understood that we love each other as Solus Amor means 'only love'. You don't need to promise to love someone when they are already fated to be your only love." I replied.

When the meal was over, the men started clearing the table. Grayson helped them, but I was told I was a guest and needed to stay out with the ladies and children.

It wasn't the worst thing in the world. Most of the women were very kind and attentive. The children asked many questions. The teens asked about every vampire trope they had ever heard of.

Several smaller children started climbing me if I stayed still long enough. Echo was comfortably chatting with the Lunas. I didn't mind being a jungle gym for the little ones if I got to see her like this.

"Uncle Victor. My mommy says you don't like naps in the sun." One of the little ones said.

"I can't go out in the sun. I used to love naps in the sun before I became a vampire." I explained.

"Victor, is that why you're so cold?" Eden asked.

“You gotta call him ‘uncle Victor’.” The other one insisted.

“I do not! He’s my brother, because he’s Gray’s mate.” She retorted, sticking out her tongue at the other child.

I heard Echo and several of the ladies start laughing. Echo was laughing so hard, she squeaked. Grayson and the other men came out to see what the women were laughing about.

“Eden, I’m not Grayson’s mate. I’m Echo’s mate.” I told her.

“Dear goddess.” I heard Grayson mutter.

“Right. And Gray is Echo’s mate. So Gray is your mate too.” She reasoned.

With a chuckle, I patted her head. “Well, I suppose that makes sense.”

“Don’t tell her that! She’ll go around telling people you’re my mate.” Grayson yelled.

“Of course, darling.” I called out.

That brought out a new peal of laughter from Echo. Everyone else was silent until Trent started chuckling. They hadn’t been prepared for the Master of the territory to say something in jest.

I knelt down and smiled at Eden. “Grayson is my friend, not my mate. It’s different We both love Echo like a mate, but we love each other like friends. Do you understand, little one?”

She looked like she was thinking about it. She pursed her little lips and tilted her head a little before nodding and smiling. I was glad I was able to get her to understand.

“It’s okay. Geoff’s mate is just a good friend too. I understand.” Eden winked and ran off to play with other children.

Well, that didn’t work out exactly as I’d hoped. I returned to where the adults were and approached Grayson. He had his arms crossed and an annoyed look on his face.

Putting my hand on his shoulder, I apologized. He uncrossed his arms and put his hand up to embrace my shoulder. I was glad he seemed to be willing to forgive my teasing.

“Now kiss!” Shouted three teens.

Echo fell out of her chair laughing as we withdrew. Trent slapped his knee and laughed. Martin seemed to snap out of the stunned mood he’d been in since I revealed that a werewolf had actually been my killer. He scowled and stormed off.

Grayson took off after the teens who screamed and ran. I helped Echo off the ground before assisting Grayson in the chase of the offending children. We cornered them and they fell to the ground, out of breath and begged us to forgive them.

We helped them all off the ground and ruffled their hair. Neither of us was particularly upset. It was the friendliest and happiest gathering I had been to in centuries.

I could actually feel the coldness of vampire culture shaking off. Talia was always warmer, maybe it was because of how much time she spent around werewolves and beings of other species. Maybe the secret to retaining that vibrant yearning for life was to be around those who celebrated every moment like other living beings do.

At the end of the evening, Echo had exchanged recipes and contact information for Silence with Grayson's mother. Now they planned on me coming to family dinner once a month until the sun started setting at a reasonable hour. Elise told me she expected me to be at every family dinner in the winter.

Being so accepted by Grayson's family made me feel a happiness I didn't realize was possible. I would enjoy watching these people as they grew and changed through the years. I couldn't wait to see what kind of man little Eden ended up with.

When we reached home, I was feeling very content. The end of the night was very near. All we had left to do was mark Echo as ours, at last, and rest. Nothing in the world sounded better to me than that.

Marking Echo

## Chapter 162 - The Vampire's Servant

As we entered the house, Wendell met us in the entry. She smiled and went to Echo, relieving her of the cooler and the dishes that resided within.

"Everyone is either in bed or in the office. We should probably consider just taking the doors off the library." Wendell told us.

"Who was it this time?" Grayson snorted.

"Finn and Amelia. It seems that he finally got through to her. They knocked down some shelves. Lisa and I got them set to rights. Those two are in Amelia's room now." She answered with a giggle.

"Who knew libraries were such aphrodisiacs?" I muttered.

“It’s just silly that every couple ends up doing things in there.” Echo smiled. “We should make ‘no hanky-panky’ signs for it. Though, I don’t know that it would stop them.”

“I’ll take care of these dishes. Is there anything else you need?” Wendell asked.

“No, thank you.” I responded and tugged Echo gently to the stairs.

We needed to get her marked so we could all be stronger. I could feel her excitement. Echo had been wanting us to mark her for nearly a month.

It was hard not giving in to her every time she asked for it. The way she pouted and pled was adorable. I was weakened whenever she turned her watery eyes on me. I have no idea how I was able to resist for so long.

Grayson followed us upstairs and into Echo’s room. He locked the door behind us and joined us where I was dancing Echo around the room. I spun Echo around to turn to Grayson.

He took her in his arms and pulled her close to him. I pulled her hair back and began licking over the crook of her neck. I paid attention tonight and saw where most of the women were marked.

“What are you doing?” Grayson asked as I switched sides.

“Making sure neither of our marks harms her. I know the pain of marking, for wolves, is turned to pleasure, but I don’t know that she’s wolf enough for that. I’m sure you wouldn’t want it to hurt her.”

“Good plan. The last thing I want is for her to be hurt or scared. See how our Victor thinks ahead, angel.” He murmured.

“He’s always taking care of me.” Echo giggled.

“I take care of you, angel.” Grayson pouted.

“We should mark her before the numbing wears off. She wasn’t saying that you didn’t take care of her, just that it’s been my job since we first met.” I replied.

Who would have thought that the frightened little girl I met nearly two months ago would become the most important person in my life? She was playful, hardworking, kind, and cool. Echo embodies some aspect of all the species that made her.

My pride in her couldn’t be any bigger. Echo was perfection. I couldn’t wait to show her the whole world.

“Are you ready, princess?” I asked.

“I’m so ready, Victor. I’ve been ready for ages.” She sighed.



“Lean your head back and lower your arms. Give us the room to claim you.” I whispered.

“At the same time?” Echo asked.

“We don’t want to risk one mark overpowering the other. We don’t know what will happen if one of us marks you before the other. No one has ever had two mates at the same time, princess.” I explained.

“O-okay.” She replied with a shiver and relaxed in our arms.

Echo leaned her head back onto my shoulder. Her arms dropped from Grayson’s shoulders to his forearms. She trusted us so fully. I loved her even more than I thought I did before.

It had been so long since someone trusted me as fully as Echo did. I relished the feeling of her trusting love. Slowly, I lowered my lips to her neck.

Grayson mimicked my movement. We were in perfect sync as we both began kissing her sweet neck. I could smell her blood pumping below the skin.

Now that Echo was healthy, we knew she’d be a strong vampire when she turned. At least as strong as me. Though, Marius suspected she would be as strong as a vampire more than twice my age.

Since I’d started off with drinking her blood separate from her, Marius wasn’t worried about me losing control and turning her. He had given his blessing for the marking a few days ago. I was elated.

I extended my fangs and reached over to Grayson’s wrist. I gave him a squeeze and we struck at the same time. Echo’s blood flowed over my tongue.

After drinking a little to seal the mark, I licked the puncture wounds and moved back. I wanted to see my mark on her beautiful skin. It took a moment for me to register what I was seeing.

My mark was gone. I could feel my connection to Echo strengthen as if it were there, but there was no puncture scar. It didn’t make sense.

“Woah. That’s weird.” Grayson said. “Victor, look at this.”

I let Echo go and went to stand in front of her. Where Grayson had bitten there was a symbol. It was almost like a tattoo, but dark red.

A crescent moon being pierced by a fang and surrounded by a solid circle, like a halo around the moon. I traced my fingers over it and Echo shivered again. I had never seen anything like it.

Looking over to Grayson, I saw the edges of a similar mark coming from his collar. I reached over and pulled his shirt aside. It was the exact same symbol.

“Grayson, do I have that mark as well?” I asked pulling my collar over.

“Yeah. I’m guessing I do, too.” He responded.

“What does it mean?” Echo asked.

“I think we were actually all meant to be together, princess. This symbol was created for us. So our bond would be more apparent.” I told her.

“Your scent has changed. You remember when we were pushing back the curse? It smells like that.” Grayson said.

“I can smell it now. I was so shocked, I wasn’t paying attention. A new mark, a new scent. Emmalyn said there were two powerful triads in the house. I wonder if this means something else.” I pondered. “I’m going to get Preston. Maybe he’ll know.”

I rushed out of the room and down the hall. I hoped he wasn’t already sleeping. I needed answers.

Normally, marks were scarred bites. For wolves, it was the canine patterns of their teeth that marked their mate as theirs. For vampires, it was an indication of having given ourselves to our Solus Amor or our chosen spouse.

Quickly, I knocked on Preston’s door. He called out for me to wait a moment. After a little while, he answered the door. He was dressed for bed.

“How can I help you, Victor?” Preston asked.

“We marked Echo tonight and something strange happened. Can you come look?” I requested.

“Is Echo okay?” He questioned in a worried tone.

“She was when I left her. We need you to come look at something.” I urged.

He nodded and followed me down the hall. When we arrived at the room, Echo and Grayson turned to us. I noted, again, what a striking couple they were.

“What’s going on? What did you want me to look at?”

Echo moved to face him and the mark was clearly visible. He paused before getting closer and looking it over. Grayson pulled aside his collar to show his.

Preston turned to me and I tugged my collar so he could see my mark. He looked stunned. Preston turned to examine Grayson’s mark more closely. After a thorough examination of all three of us, he shook his head.

“I’ve never seen a mark like that. The crescent moon has long been a symbol of werewolves. The fang looks like a vampire’s. If I were to guess, the circle is a protection circle, the kind witches draw before doing spellwork.” Preston murmured as he looked over Echo’s mark once more.

“Is there anything you might know about it?” Grayson asked.

“Only that it’s a blood mark. Something that hasn’t been seen in witches in centuries. It was one of the ways hunters would identify us. We requested that the goddess remove them to keep us safe. Occasionally, children are born with one, but it fades as they grow older.” He said. “This may not fade, though. I suppose this place is much safer than the rest of the country. What with Queen Bellamy’s hunter squads.”

“What did the blood marks do?” Echo asked.

“They would tell us what affinity children had. That’s why yours is so strange. No one has an affinity for vampires and werewolves. I would almost call this a supernatural affinity. You would be the first witch ever to have one. Which would make Victor and Gray your familiars. Animal affinity witches often have one.” Preston explained.

“Familiars, as in servants?” I asked.

“No, nothing like that. They’re usually close friends with the witch, being able to understand him or her and enjoying spending time with the witch. They talk to the witch and share information. I think this is more like an expansion of a marriage mark, mixed with a blood mark. Nothing to worry about. You can probably play it off as a matching tattoo you got with Gray if anyone outside the house questions it, Echo.” He said.

I nodded. That made sense. We were something the world had never seen. A Master vampire, an alpha blood wolf, and a blend of pretty much every supernatural in a mate bond.

“I’m heading back to bed, unless you need something else.” Preston smiled.

“Thank you for coming. I appreciate your patience.” I replied.

“No problem. See you all in the morning.” He said and left the room.

I locked the door and crossed the room to Echo and Grayson. Echo had a big smile on her face. I remembered how excited she was to finally be marked.

Echo reached up to caress my face. Grayson kissed the fingertips of her other hand. I followed suit. She was my precious mate and he was my dear friend. We would be together now for all of eternity.

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[Melissa]

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I paced a little. Alex and Dad had left hours ago to go scout the place where Gray's truck was parked. I hoped they were alright.

On Thursday, we went to the restaurant where he worked with one objective in mind. Finding the wolf pack. I tried to get him to tell me where Echo lived so I could get her and Sean too.

My stomach twisted. I couldn't believe I came on to a fucking witch. All these werewolves and witches needed to die for how they embarrassed me.

When Sean's father told me he was staying with his cousin, Echo, I realized what that meant. I bet they were laughing at me. It occurred to me that Rosario was a little too tall to not be something like a werewolf. I'd kill her too.

We'd wipe out the whole pack then go after the coven. After we got rid of them, we would start hunting the vampires. My dad said that there were two hunters in the area a couple months ago who were after vampires, but they disappeared.

They didn't have what we had, though. Aside from the four of us, Alex had contacted another fifteen or sixteen other hunters he knew. Mom and Dad contacted a few of their friends, too.

"Stop that, Melissa. You're making me nervous." Mom said as she finished sharpening a silver sword.

Mom was fond of swords when she ran out of bullets. Dad talked about how much he loved watching her work when they were younger. It was actually making them a little friskier around the house.

"I'm just worried. What if the wolves find them?" I asked.

"You saw the areal pictures of where that wolf parked his truck. There's no way that's the pack lands. He lives off the pack lands, which makes him an easier target. Once we get him, we can torture him until he reveals where the rest of the beasts are." Mom told me.

"How does he afford to live in a place like that? I mean, it's obvious that he's not poor, but he never seemed to have the sort of money for a place like that, and there's no way that tips could pay for it." I sighed as I sat next to her.

"The only answer is that it belongs to someone else. The coven leader, the Master of the territory, another vampire. Maybe his mate is rich." She shrugged.

"I'm pretty sure that Echo is his mate. They were all over each other in school. Almost as bad as Harmony and Cam. I even saw Gray take Echo to the backstage area where some kids went to get it on at school." I said.

“Then she is probably the coven leader’s daughter. They can be rich from having the other witches pay them a certain amount of their income. Don’t worry. Your dad and Alex will come home soon and we’ll have the layout figured.” Mom smiled.

As if on cue, the front door opened. I jumped up and ran over, hugging my dad and brother when they came in. I was so happy they made it home safely.

Dad and Alex came into the living room. They looked pretty happy. I sat next to Mom again, as she put her sword on the coffee table.

“We were right, that wasn’t the pack land. There are two werewolf guards walking the perimeter. Just after the sun went down, we saw the wolf and the witch get into a car with another man. I don’t know what he is, but he moved too fluidly to be human. I think he’s a vampire.” Dad said.

“Do you think it’s the Master?” I asked.

“Probably just a chauffeur. He held the door open for the girl. I think she’s more important than just the servant of the Master. She sat in the back of the car while the men were both in the front.” Alex told us.

“Melissa was just saying that the witch and the wolf act like mates. That doesn’t make any sense. Do you know where they were taking her?” Mom asked.

“I think that may be a ruse. There’s an old story around here about the first Master of the territory and a witch who was his mate. The coven leader put a stop to that. Can you imagine vampire/witch hybrids?” Dad sneered.

That was disgusting. It was bad enough that they were monsters, they should really keep it in their own species. It all made sense, though. Everyone acted like she was special. If she’s the Master’s whore, then that would make sense.

“Then Gray’s her bodyguard?”

“It seems that he has wolf servants all over. I think that it’s safe to assume that he is assigned to watch over the witch in public. What better cover than pretending to be her boyfriend?”

“But no one was watching when they were in the workroom. I don’t understand.”

“She’s cheating on the vampire with the werewolf. Everyone knows how witches can be. They’re all sluts, dancing naked in the moonlight, always hugging and touching others.” Alex replied with disgust.

“What’s the plan?” I asked.

“We get our forces together and keep an eye on the property. I want a good idea of how many people are in there and what species they are. It seems to be mostly vampires, werewolves, and

witches, from what we could see. I want to know what the exact numbers are for each. We saw a big vampire with a female something. We could see his eyes glowing through the window.” Dad reported.

We worked more on our plan and the information on the hunters who were coming to join us. Dad had me and Alex work on cleaning the cell in the basement for Gray, or whatever werewolf we got ahold of. Soon, we’d wipe out the monsters from our home.

Truth Spell

## Chapter 163 - The Vampire's Servant

[Echo]

It was finally time. It was Tuesday night and it had been nine days since we’d done all of the spell’s instructions. Finally, we could make Fenton talk.

Talia said that Sookie told her she didn’t know how well it would work with the difference in species. If it helped at all, then we would be happy with the results. We needed more to figure out how he changed the spells.

Lila had recovered the missing spells with her investigation. She just couldn’t figure out how he had changed them. There had to be a change if they were to work the way they did and she couldn’t test it without needing to repeat conditions.

Marius had been more than willing to get her the needed sacrifices, but they couldn’t seem to get it to work. Fixation was a spell that was typically cast on a person. It needed a lot of magic in order to attach to the person. That magic could be mimicked with sacrifices, but they would fade after the person died.

Fenton used a life extending spell, which also needed sacrifices. Lila hadn’t noticed it missing because she only pulled it out when she needed to double check it. All witches had a handful of spells they memorized and that was one that she made sure she knew backward and forward.

There was actually no way to do that spell without sacrifices of other people. It was an entirely dark spell. Lila insisted on being in the room when we questioned Fenton. She couldn’t understand him, but she wanted to be able to ask questions.

I was more than happy to have her there. She would be able to shine a light on things from a dark witch’s perspective. We needed that little bit of extra information and experience.

Everyone gathered in the office. It ended up quite crowded. Harmony sat on Cam's lap. Amelia sat on Finn's. I kind of wanted to sit on Victor or Gray, but it had been decided that I would be the one to question Fenton.

Victor said it was because I could get under Fenton's skin. He hated that I could tune him out and didn't get as upset as everyone else when he was being a jerk. It was particularly irking to him that I wasn't crazy anymore.

Fenton had figured out that I was no longer in the thrall of the curse. He was livid and demanded to know what vampire was Master now. We refused to bring the new Master, and Fenton thought we were trying to protect him so he pushed the curse even harder.

Marius was giving us updates on how the curse was affecting Daniel. Because he was in a similar sort of cell as the ones in the basement, his natural resistance as a vampire was nonexistent. He was apparently demanding that I be given to him.

When Marius told Daniel I had been marked by Victor, Daniel started slamming his head against the cell door and walls, screaming that I belonged to only him. Some of the things Marius told Victor were disturbing. Daniel started saying really horrible things that he planned to do to me once he was free.

I was promised that he could never escape and that I was completely safe. It made me feel only a little better. I still didn't like it, but my safety was assured.

Victor nodded to me. It was time to start the questioning. I had a bunch of questions ready as well. I'd spent most of my free time over the last week figuring out things we needed to know.

Sitting in front of the cage, I pulled out my notebook and a pencil. Fenton looked at me curiously. I took a deep breath. Finally, some answers.

"Fenton, how are you today?" I asked.

There was a scoff behind me. I didn't care. I wanted to start easy.

"Fine. Why do you ask? You never cared before."

"I hope you're ready to answer some questions." I smiled.

"I won't eat or drink anything that smells like a spell. There's nothing you can do to make me tell you anything." He replied.

"What do you really think of Gray?" I asked.

"For a wolf, he's a good sort. He seems to have a kind heart and is always very gentle with me, which I appreciate. The cat likes him and wants to be his pet. I think he's not as good for you as the vampire is, but he's a good balance for the coldness of your other mate." Fenton said.

“Wow.” Sean whispered.

“What have you done to me?” Fenton asked.

“That’s not how this will work, Fenton. I ask the questions.” I told him. “How did you combine the spells?”

He growled. “I cast each spell then did my sacrifices. Fifteen people. A mix of humans and witches. Ones that no one would miss. All young enough to give me a good long life and with enough power to rival my own if it was all consolidated. It should have powered the curse for a few hundred years. But the spells wanted more. I was given an unending life because of this curse. Do you know how many times I’ve been run over, or even shot, only to come back into this body?”

“That must be frustrating. How can we break the curse?” I pressed.

Fenton started laughing. “I have no clue. If I could have ended this life, I would have already. Everything else would outlive me. The only perk to this body is that I was able to watch people suffer. No one knew it was me. It took me decades before I realized my family could understand me.”

Harmony had been quietly repeating what Fenton said. Lila started laughing as well. Hers was more of a mocking laughter, where Fenton’s was pitiful.

“I can’t believe you sealed yourself into the body of a cat! You totally deserve it you cranky old fuck. I hope you suffered over the last century for what you did. I may be a dark witch, but what you did was so selfish and stupid that you made dark witches look like a fucking joke.” She snorted.

“I asked for your help! You refused! You said that I should just let Grace do what she wanted and that having this many people against me was just proof that I was making the wrong choice. You have no idea what I was doing or why! You only thought I was trying to control my daughter.” He snarled.

“Why did you do it, then?” I asked.

“For you, your sister, and your brother. I heard you saying there could have been a triad if Grace had stayed here. There wouldn’t have been. I saw a fire witch who could see the future in their flames. He told me that a triad would come if I sent my daughter away. No matter what, she would thrive, this way I could ensure power unlike anyone had ever seen.” Fenton said.

“You were going to steal their power, weren’t you?” Lila asked.

“Of course I was. I could be one of the most powerful dark witches to have ever existed. All I needed was to live long enough for them to be born. Then this happened to me. I have no magic, only the ability to control the magics I’ve already enacted and direct the power of all the magic I



used to create the curse. I could have killed that vampire and taken the triplets for myself.” He replied.

“That means... you were going to kill us.” I whispered.

“His heart was dead before the rest of his body died. It was where I always drew the line and always will. Children have never done anything to deserve having their lives cut short. I can’t believe you, Fenton. Taking love from your daughter just so you can kill her great grandchildren. These are your flesh and blood. How could you have actually planned to kill your own descendants?” Lila sneered.

“As easily as I planned for a curse to torment generations of supernaturals. You think I care just because they’re related to me? Grace taught me that it didn’t matter the relation, people will turn on you. No matter what, they were going to die. Why not die to make me more powerful?” Fenton answered.

“You took her wanting to be with her soulmate as turning on you?” Amelia asked.

“A dutiful daughter listens to her father. She respects him and regards him as the person who directs and guides the family. She wanted to stay here with that vampire, even though I searched for months to find her a good match. They offered me money in return for my daughter. A power like hers was worth more than mere money.” He growled.

“Without you, Fixation would fade. Is that correct?” I asked, trying to get the conversation back on track.

“As far as I can tell, Fixation will die with me. The problem is, I can’t die. There’s nothing you can do until the lives I stole are all gone from me. It seems we will be together for a very long time.” Fenton chuckled.

I didn’t like that. Victor needed his territory back. All we had to do was figure out how to end Fenton’s life. That will kill the last bit of the curse.

Turning to Lila, I told her what we needed. She had to research how to break the spell she used to grant her a longer life. I knew she could die, but the way this was attached, gave Fenton a, seemingly, endless life. That meant we needed to break the spell with something other than his death.

She promised to work on it and disappeared with Marius. Preston said that he would work on it too.

“Dark witches only think of dark ways to get what they want. I will be thinking of ways to end this curse that are more light. There has to be something we can do that will not push us into using dark magic.” Preston insisted.

“Thank you, Preston. I want to get this resolved as quickly as possible and without going dark if we can avoid it. Try to think outside of the box. Even really strange ideas are welcome. Anything will help.” I told him.

“I tried everything I could about thirty years ago. There’s no way to kill me. You think I wanted this. A century of licking myself, using a litter box, eating tasteless kibble, and being chased by dogs.” Fenton chuckled mirthlessly. “I was supposed to be powerful. I was supposed to be one of the strongest witches in the world. I was supposed to be able to get whatever my heart desired.”

“The goddess knew she couldn’t let you live as you were. This was your punishment for using dark magic.” Preston scolded.

“She doesn’t punish other dark witches. Only me. I’m always punished for even the smallest infractions. The goddess keeps me around so I can be her jester, her fool. It’s my punishment for killing my Guinevere.” Fenton grumbled.

“What do you mean? Who’s Guinevere?” I asked.

“My wife. I knew she wasn’t healthy after having Grace. That didn’t stop me from badgering her into getting pregnant again. My sweet dove could never tell me no. There was a blood clot from the birth. It gave her a stroke and high blood pressure along with a multitude of other things caused her to be taken from me. If I could have gotten the power of the triad, I could have brought her back. We could have been together again. When I realized what had happened with the curse, I tried to die so I could be with her. There was no way I could take their powers as a cat. My only hope for seeing her again was to stop living, but I cursed myself when I cursed everyone else. You have no idea the torment of being separated from the only person who ever really loved you. She may not have been my soulmate, but she was my everything and I didn’t realize it until I lost her.” Fenton murmured.

“Why didn’t you just wait until the kids were old enough to care for themselves and kill yourself then? Why did you decide on cursing everyone? Why did you make so many suffer?” Gray pressed.

“You wouldn’t understand. They suffered because I did. I lived because I didn’t like the idea of dying. If living was an option, I wanted to live. I wanted to live and I wanted her to live. I wanted to be able to give her everything I hadn’t been able to give her before, back when I only saw her as a means of getting more children and not as the loving, caring, woman she was. She was the only one who really loved me. My children only saw me as a caregiver, not as a family member to be loved and cherished. That was made obvious by Grace’s dalliance with the vampire.” Fenton said.

I got up off the floor and went to Gray, wrapping my arms around him. I couldn’t imagine losing him. Gray kissed the top of my head and I felt another pair of arms wrap around me. I knew it was Victor.

“Never worry about losing us, angel. We’re here forever. Even if you have to turn me into a vampire too. I’m never going to let you be alone again.” Gray promised.

“Neither shall I, princess. We will work our hardest to always be there for you. You’ll never be alone again.”

I breathed them in deeply. I knew I would never be alone. I would have my sister and brother, my friends, and my mates.

A Possibility

## Chapter 164 - The Vampire's Servant

It was another three days before we had an idea for getting rid of Fenton. It wasn’t Lila or Preston who came up with it. It was Val.

We were in the family room, playing games, when he paused and turned to me. I looked at him, curious about why he paused when he was winning. Val was fairly competitive and didn’t like giving up the chance to win. I found I was very much the same.

“What’s up?” I asked.

“What about an exorcism? I know it’s something humans do to rid people of evil spirits. Witches must have something like that, don’t you think?” Val suggested.

“You mean for getting rid of Fenton?” I asked.

“Yeah. I think it could work. The soul of the cat is still in there. We can probably save it like you and Gray are wanting to. I only worry that the old trope of something aging and dying rapidly could happen to the cat once the magic isn’t there to keep it alive. I think we need to know more from Lila about how the life lengthening spell works.” Val said excitedly.

“We can call her! I bet she can answer the questions.” I replied.

“You do that while I go ask Preston about the exorcism spell.” Val told me, jumping up.

I pulled out my phone as he left and dialed Lila’s number. Victor thought it was important that I have a way to contact her, so he programmed it into my phone. I waited for her to pick up.

“Hey, Echo. What’s up?” Lila asked as she came on the line.

“Val has an idea for getting Fenton out of the cat. I just needed to know about the life extension spell that you use. What happens when you reach the end of it?” I asked.

“When I reach the end of it? Well, basically, this spell freezes you at whatever age you were when you started it. Once the extra life I’ve taken is gone, I will start aging from there and have the rest of my natural life span. It won’t happen rapidly, if that’s what you’re asking. It will be like my life was paused at twenty-six and I will move on to be twenty-seven after that.” She explained.

“So the cat won’t die if we remove Fenton from it?” I asked.

“Cat physiology and human physiology are different. I don’t know how old the cat was when Fenton ended up stuck in it. I want to say that he shouldn’t age. The cat should live his natural life span after that. Are you planning to keep it as a pet?” Lila snickered.

“Yes. We’re going to give it the love and care it deserves. Fenton said he was run over, shot, and attacked by dogs. That means the cat had to live through those things as well. He should have a life of care and cuddles. I never got to have a pet. I bet Gray will love it.” I replied with a smile.

“You really are too pure. I can’t even bring myself to tease you. Don’t get me wrong, I have a lot of dirty things I could say right now, but saying them to you makes me feel weird and gross.” Lila told me.

“I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry. We have a long life for me to get comfortable with you and for you to become less pristine. One day, I’m going to be able to say something nasty to you and you’re going to laugh instead of turning all red and saying ‘I don’t know what that means’ in your breathy little girl voice.” She chuckled.

I felt myself blush. I couldn’t imagine a day when I would understand what everyone was talking about. There was plenty of time, it made sense that I would have that one day.

“Thank you for being my friend, Lila, and for loving my papa. He needs someone to make him happy. From what Talia has told me, he’s been very lonely for his entire vampire life.” I said softly.

“You don’t mind that I’m a dark witch, do you? Grace was the same way. She said for light to exist, there needs to be dark and I was part of the natural order of things. She used to tell me that I wasn’t entirely dark because I drew the line at children and honestly good people.” Lila whispered.

“She was right. You’re a dark witch and that makes you a good match for a man like my papa. The fact that you have your own set of morals makes you an even better fit for him. He only hurts people who deserve it. If you were an entirely dark witch, Marius wouldn’t have even given you a second glance.” I told her.

“Well, I’m glad for it then. Thank you for being my friend, too. I feel like helping you is making up for not being able to help Grace. Maybe Marius is my reward from the Goddess for not being all that bad. That’s possible, right?” She asked.

“I think that’s exactly what happened. You deserved something for not going completely dark, Lila. Thank you for your help on this. We’ll let you know how things with Preston go. If this is the answer we’re seeking, we may call you to help adapt it for what we need.” I said.

“You may need the power of your triad. This isn’t how these spells are supposed to be used. We may need an unconventional way of getting rid of them.” Lila responded.

“We’re hoping that this is unconventional enough, but I’ll make sure to give your suggestion to Val and Preston.”

We said our goodbyes and hung up. I really wanted Lila to feel accepted in our family. Marius was important to me. If he loved her enough to propose, I wasn’t going to make him think I was against her. He was old enough to know his heart.

I wasn’t going to lose relationships over petty things like who was and wasn’t a dark witch. In the long run, I was more vampire than witch. We had different guidelines for darkness.

Marius was feared because of the severity of his punishments. He wouldn’t just kill people; he would make them suffer. Ever since Victor’s rules started in the Council, Marius had been able to punish far more vampires than he had previously. Talia told me that was one of the reasons she knew Marius liked Victor.

For a while, I’d been worried that Marius didn’t like either of my mates. He was always very cool to them. Talia told me that he was actually a lot nicer to Gray than he was to most werewolves, except Harmony. She then pointed out how much better he treated Gray than he did Cam.

I was almost certain that Gray’s fighting against the torture had made Marius mad at him. Talia told me that he actually found it refreshing to see someone stick to their beliefs even in the face of so much opposition and someone as powerful as Marius himself. I was proud of Gray for that. He was pretty stubborn.

Val returned with Preston, who was carrying a book. I’d wondered what took them so long. It seemed that Preston had some idea of what could help us. I was excited.

“Val told me your idea. We have a few options. There’s nothing for removing a secondary soul from a being. A few spells deal with removing malevolent spirits from structures and land. There is one for removing them from people. Malevolent spirits rarely inhabit animals and you usually get rid of them by killing the animal and performing a cleansing.” Preston explained.

“There’s nothing like the whole exorcism bit that needs an old priest and a young one?” Val asked.

“Not really. I have one for guiding a lost spirit back home to the Goddess. Maybe if we combine that with the spell for removing spirits from people...” Preston mumbled as he looked through his book.

“Lila suggested using the power of the triad. Do you think that will help?” I asked.

“There are some spells that work better with the focus of a coven. The added power can boost the effects of a spell. With something as powerful as removing Fenton, we may need a whole coven. You and your siblings can almost mimic that. You’re very powerful, but we may need more than that.” Preston said.

“What if we had both triads and all the witches in the house?” Val suggested. “Emmalyn says that Echo, Victor, and Gray make their own powerful triad. They were able to add the power and focus for pushing the curse back on Echo.”

“Their marks prove that they’re blessed by the Goddess. There isn’t any precedent for something like that. I think it’s a good idea, though. We should talk to everyone at dinner. Do you think we can get Brian to come help with it? The more witches we have, the better.” Preston said. “I think we’ll need more than we have, though. This is a really powerful spell.”

“Can we use Lila? I know that she’ll want to help.” I told him.

“I don’t normally like to add the magic of a dark witch to spells, but we’ll need as much power as we can get and she’s a powerful witch. I’m sure the Goddess will excuse it. Light and dark witches working together to rid the world of a darker spirit is something she would want. If we can put aside our differences for this, I’m sure she would have a lot of hope for witches in general.” Preston smiled.

“Is Sean’s sister still in town? She might make a good addition. I’ll ask the coven leader if there’s anyone who would want to come help us with this.” Val said.

“I’ll go check with Sean. You want to contact Brian, Uncle Preston?” I asked.

“Will do.” He nodded.

I left the family room and went to the library. Ever since I was marked by Gray and Victor, I could smell each person in the house distinctly. Rosario and Sean smelled like plants, but Rosario smelled like the mixture of trees in spring and fresh earth, while Sean actually smelled like a ripe cantaloupe.

He was by himself. It was rare, but I was grateful. Rosario hadn’t really been relaxed around me since they returned.

Rosario promised that he would just feel better after the curse was really gone. He didn’t know if it would come back in me like it did in Victor. I understood. I worried about that a little myself. It made me extra careful.

Sean was sitting on the couch, writing in his notebook. I came up and sat in the nearby chair. I didn't want to startle him too much.

After a minute or two, Sean looked up at me. He smiled and closed his notebook.

"What's up, Echo?" He asked.

"We have an idea for removing Fenton from the cat. We need a few more witches. We were wondering if your sister was still in town." I said.

"Oh. She was pretty upset when dad told her about what we were. She's still in town but I don't know if Brooke would be up for it. I can call her and ask." Sean offered.

"Can you do it now? Or do you need time? Preston is calling your dad to ask if he wants to help with it." I asked.

"I'd like to do it without the pressure of someone looking over my shoulder. I'll call now and come find you." He replied.

"We'll be in the family room when you have the answer. I need to talk to Victor and Gray about it too. We're using both triads for it. Preston still has to figure out how to combine the two spells we're using." I told him and stood.

"Wait on telling them until we're sure we can get the backup we need. I don't want to get anyone's hopes up. Speaking of that, Echo. I was wondering about something earlier. Have you been treating Gray better? When the curse had you, you weren't really listening to him. He deserves to be listened to as much as you listen to Victor." Sean said.

I was a little stunned. "Umm. I think I have been. Gray has been teaching me more about werewolves. I listen to everything he says."

"I just want to be sure that you're treating him like he deserves. He's a good guy. He was right about not torturing Fenton. I should have listened to him, but I was so angry. I don't fault you for that. I just want to be sure that you're treating him right now that the curse doesn't have you." He responded gently.

"I'm trying, Sean. I promise that I'll take good care of him. Gray is important to me. I love him as much as I love Victor. He's a big part of my heart. I'll always try to make him feel special." I promised.

"Good. I'll come see you soon. Go on." Sean waved me off.

I headed back to the family room where Val and Preston were waiting. I hoped they had good news. It would be really great if we could get rid of Fenton before the weekend. I wanted to spend more time with Gray and Victor. I would get that back once we didn't have to have so many people in our house.

## Chapter 165 - The Vampire's Servant

I let Victor and Gray know we'd have an announcement about the last part of the curse at dinner time. They were as excited as us. Preston and Val spent the rest of the afternoon working on how to mingle the spells.

Our assessment said that we would need at least five witches past what we had in the house. Preston confirmed Brian would help. Val called the coven leader and asked about getting two to three volunteers. We would know in a day or two.

When we went to dinner, I was bursting with excitement. We took our seats. The dinner table hadn't been as lively in the last week, but it was starting to come to life a little more.

Some part of me would miss it when everyone was gone, but another part of me was really eager for the time when I'd be alone with Gray and Victor. They'd lay with me and cuddle me, but I missed every part of our relationship. The things we couldn't do while my brother lived with us.

Once everyone was seated, Victor stood. He had a commanding presence and eyes turned to him immediately. He was made for leading.

"There is an announcement for the final step in breaking the curse. Valor, Preston, and Echo have found a viable option and have spent the afternoon working on it. Preston, would you like to present it?" Victor said.

He sat and Preston stood. Everyone looked to my uncle. Amelia seemed extra excited. She bounced in her seat and gripped Finn's arm.

"Val actually came up with the idea. He asked me if there were any forms of exorcism witches could do. We found two options that may work. Right now, Val and I are working on combining the two spells. This will take everyone in the house who has witch blood. We think we may need at least five more witches. Lila has already volunteered. Brian has agreed to come and help. We need three more witches." Preston concluded.

"My sister, Brooke, says that we'd need to teach her what to do, but she'll help. She was upset with dad for not telling her this, and upset with me for not telling her that I was gay, but she wants to use her power to do something good." Sean said.

"The coven leader says that everyone in the coven will be notified that we need at least three more witches to fully break the curse. We may have trouble, though, because we had to disclose that there was a dark witch helping. Some won't work with vampires either." Val told us.



It made me sad that people were so wrapped up in the idea of species being evil. I could understand them not wanting to work with a dark witch, but there was nothing that said vampires were evil. I'd known bad vampires and good ones.

Then it occurred to me. I went with Victor because I was sure I would die anyway and decided to choose the person who would end my life. For the first week or so, I even locked my bedroom door. I put my trust in him because he seemed honest enough, but I didn't give him my whole trust.

It took a little longer, but I could tell his heart was honest once I'd healed up a little more. I wanted to let them know how good Victor was, but the odds of them trusting me weren't great. People had strange ideas about what vampire hypnosis could do.

"The Goddess will guide the right people to us. Don't worry, Echo." Harmony smiled. "This is her plan too. She'll make sure we have friends who will help us out."

"I hope so, Harmony. I want Victor to have his title back and I want Fenton gone." I replied.

"I feel a little bad for him. He feels so guilty about losing his wife." Amelia murmured.

"He barely took responsibility for that. He decided to kill children to get her back. I feel bad for everyone who suffered because of him, but I could never pity a dark witch." Emmalyn scoffed.

"Emmy, you heard how regretful he was for what he did. I can't imagine what would happen if I lost Finn because of my own selfishness. I almost did and I didn't even realize it." Amelia countered.

"You could never go dark, Amelia. You don't have it in you. You're way to light for that. You didn't almost lose Finn, he would have followed you to the ends of the Earth trying to get you to come back to him." Emmalyn said.

"She's telling the truth. I can find whatever I search for. I would have always found you and would have annoyed you until you took me back. Groveling isn't beneath me. I would have crawled on the ground behind you begging you to take me back." Finn replied with a wink.

Amelia giggled. "I can almost imagine that. Our parents are going to have such a fit when they find out my soulmate is a vampire."

"It's a good thing we're not in a coven. Most coven leaders would denounce Amelia as a dark witch just for that. I've heard Rhea, the coven leader back home, isn't that bad. I know that others might pressure her into it, though." Emmalyn told us.

"You're free witches?" Preston asked.

"Yes. Grandpa left his coven and enjoyed the freedom of being a free witch. The city near Bellamy's pack is very friendly to free witches. There's a coven, but they don't apply much

pressure. Though, I'm sure they would if they knew about Val. A triple affinity witch is super rare. Double affinities happen with more regularity than a triple does. The arranged marriages were meant to spread that gene among as many witching families as possible. Odds of meeting a triple affinity witch in a typical lifetime are slim." Emmalyn explained.

"Finding a triple affinity witch is so rare that people will pay to enter into marriage arrangements. Parents will have their choice of spouse for their child. A double affinity is sought after, but not as desirable as a triple. I suggest you do your soulmate search as soon as possible. You'll want to find your soulmate to stop covens from sending you a stream of eligible women." Preston chuckled.

"They'd do that?" Val asked.

"Oh, definitely. There's a dual affinity free witch in our town. She runs a magic shop and teahouse called Sit a Spell. Apparently, she refused a marriage arrangement. Told the prospective groom and his parents that she would go dark if she was forced to marry against her will. She's like eighty now and has never been married. Miss Tonya is the nicest lady ever, but she takes no guff and doesn't stand for people telling her how to live her life. She told me a story once about how the coven had sent her a dozen men to choose from when she first opened her shop. They tried boycotting her when she turned them all down. What they didn't count on was her befriending a powerful vampire who would bring her ingredients from her travels." Amelia said.

"Oh, my Tonya!" Talia grinned. "Yes, I remember meeting her while she was gathering herbs out in the forest near her home when she was in her twenties or thirties. We had a little fling and I promised to always bring her interesting things. I had actually planned on taking Bellamy to her back when I found her, but I was called away because somebody went swanning off after his wayward childe. When I returned to retrieve Bellamy, our friend told me she'd died in a vampire attack."

Victor chuckled. "It truly is a small world, isn't it?"

"I hunted down the vampires who had survived and erased them from existence. I can imagine the life little Bellamy would have had being raised by a witch. It all worked out in the end." Talia shrugged. "No other future would have given Bellamy the gifts and renown she enjoys now."

We finished our meal while everyone chatted about what their plans were for after the curse was gone. Amelia told Finn that she wanted to spend a year back home letting her parents get to know him before they traveled. She wanted them to understand that she was with a good man who could take care of her.

On some level, I wished I had a relationship with a parent like that. Marius was very fatherly, but it wasn't quite the same as having someone who's watched you grow all your life worrying over you. I'd take what I could, though. Marius was my father in almost every way.

He loved me and my siblings like we were his own. He cared about us and our health. I knew he'd put down his foot with Gray and Victor as well. They regarded him as my father.

After dinner, Gray took me out to the garden for a walk. Victor had work. I knew our life would always be like this. The early part of the evening would belong to the territory, the rest could be for us, as long as nothing else came up.

I leaned into Gray's side as we wandered the pathways through my plants. We got to an area where there was a bench near a little two-tiered fountain. He pulled me to sit in his lap.

Cuddling into his chest, I felt complete and happy. Gray caressed my cheek and pulled me into a sweet kiss. His hand slipped down my body, to the edge of my skirt.

"Gray. What are you doing?" I murmured against his lips.

"Your brother is busy. Everyone is doing their own thing. Victor and I miss being with you, angel." Gray whispered as he kissed my chin and jaw.

"Victor?" I asked.

"Yes, princess?" He said softly from behind me.

I turned and saw him making his way to me. Heat overcame my body. I needed them both so badly.

The idea of being with them again, overrode my nervousness at being outside. I'd been craving them all week. I was already feeling myself getting wetter as I wondered what their plan was for me.

Victor knelt by the bench and reached under my skirt, pulling my panties off. I watched him slip them into his pocket and made a mental note to ask for them back when we were done. I giggled at the familiarity of my panty thief Solus Amor.

But, he wasn't truly my only love. Gray nibbled at my neck and I could feel his love and desire for me coming from our bond. Victor wasn't my only love, just my first love and I cherished both men in my heart.

"Now, Echo, we need you to be as quiet as you can. We can only have the people in the house distracted so much. If they hear you get as loud as you normally do, we're going to end up with an audience. We don't want that." Victor murmured as he turned my body in Gray's lap.

Gray groaned at my behind grinding into him. I loved the sound and wiggled a little more in his lap. He bit down on my neck and I arched as I bit my lips together, trying not to squeal.

"No teasing, angel. I've waited too long for this." Gray growled in my ear.

I whimpered and nodded my head. Victor positioned himself between my legs and bent down. The first touch of his tongue to my lower lips made me moan quietly.

He spread me gently and began licking and sucking. His tongue was skillful, velvety, and diligent. A finger slid inside of me for the first time in weeks.

Gray's hands slipped under my shirt and he started fondling and manipulating my breasts. The electric feeling of his touch threw me over the edge I'd been dancing along. I clenched my teeth together as my body tensed and grasped.

Another finger joined the one inside of me. I mumbled a groan at the feeling. Victor must have assumed I would need some loosening up after going so long without them.

After a few more minutes, and orgasms, I realized that Victor had worked most of his hand inside of me. This was way more than I was used to and I could feel the strain of my body trying to accommodate his hand.

"Wh-what are you doing, Victor?" I asked.

"We couldn't risk your brother figuring out we were up to something. I couldn't go to my room for lubricant, princess." He answered.

"We're going to have you at the same time, angel. It's just going to be a little different from how we normally do it. Don't worry. Victor says it shouldn't be painful. We would never hurt you, Echo." Gray promised.

"Are you hurting? Do you need me to stop?" Victor asked.

"N-no. Keep going." I sighed.

Deep down, I had the worry that they both wouldn't fit. They filled me up when it was just one. Two might just kill me. But I missed them so much.

Thinking of having them at the same time made me excited. We'd never done this before, but the idea of both of them in me at the same time made my heart soar. I loved how we normally did it, but this would be something new we could do together.

"She's ready, Grayson." Victor whispered, picking me up off Gray's lap.

Gray unzipped his pants and pulled them down as he sat on the bench. Victor turned me to face Gray and lowered me until I was straddling Gray's lap and he was inside me. I moaned lightly and kissed Gray passionately.

Victor's hands rested on my waist and he moved me up and down Gray's shaft before pulling me up so far that Gray fell out of me. I felt Victor slide inside me and pump a few times as Gray fumbled with the buttons on my shirt, slid it off, and undid the clasp on my bra before taking it off too.

His lips and tongue found the tips of my breast and he gently licked and sucked on them as Victor took me from behind. Then, as suddenly as he'd taken me, Victor slid out of me and guided my body back to Gray.

"Take a deep breath and relax, princess." Victor murmured from behind me.

"Are you sure you'll both fit, Victor?" I asked breathily.

"More than sure. You were made for both of us. You can accommodate both of us, Echo. I would never do anything you couldn't handle. Trust me and relax." He said, kissing my neck.

I did what he said and soon felt the pressure of Victor entering me. Gray held me close to him and rubbed my back while kissing my cheek and neck.

"You're doing great, angel. Oh, Goddess, that feels so good." Gray groaned.

"Move in and out a little, Grayson." Victor instructed.

The feeling of Gray moving in me and Victor progressing inside of me made me moan. There were tears in my eyes from the effort it was taking not to force myself down on both of them.

It did hurt a little, but nothing worth stopping for and I knew it would feel good soon. Victor stopped moving while Gray kept moving in and out slowly. Victor's hands came down on the back of the bench by Gray's shoulders.

He groaned lightly as Gray kept moving. As if he were working out the pacing, Victor started moving in me as well. When one pulled back, the other pushed in. The pressure pushed Gray against the spot inside me that felt wonderful.

I tried to stay still as they lavished me with their attention. Gray's hands went back to my breasts while Victor sucked and nibbled my neck. I knew he was going to bite me. Talia told me that vampires bite during sex and that was why Amelia had bites but wasn't marked.

Turning my head, I kissed Victor passionately before turning back and kissing Gray just as deeply. He groaned into my mouth as Victor picked up his pace. Gray stopped moving for a few moments.

For every one stroke Gray did, Victor did two or three. I loved the feeling of my two men and the differences in their techniques. Victor reached around and started rubbing my clit as he took me from behind.

It pushed me over the edge and both of them froze as I whimpered my release as quietly as I could. My body pushing and gripping at theirs.

"Goddess, I'm so close. It's been so long and never felt like this before." Gray whispered.

“Just stay like that, Grayson. I’ll finish us.” Victor murmured.

Gray stopped moving and Victor started moving even faster and harder. I dug my fingernails into Gray’s shoulders and arched, making both of them groan softly.

Soon, I felt the heat of Gray releasing into me and, not long after, Victor’s fangs sunk into my neck. He stopped moving, but I could feel all the little twitches of both of them as they finished inside me. I tried so hard to keep myself from screaming as a final orgasm ripped through me.

I lurched forward heavily and panted against Gray’s shoulder. Victor sealed the bite and kissed my cheek before withdrawing from me.

“I’m sorry I can’t stay and cuddle you, princess. I need to get my work done so I can be with you later this evening. I’ll see you at bedtime.” Victor said softly and gave me one more kiss before pulling up his pants and disappearing down the garden path.

“Cam is calling for me in the link, angel. Your brother has noticed we’ve been gone a little while. I’m going to head in and try to throw him off of what we were doing.” Gray told me, kissing me on top of the head. “I promise lots of cuddles tonight. I love you, Echo.”

I mumbled something that sounded like ‘love you too’ as he lifted me off him and pulled up his pants before disappearing. I sat on the bench, the result of our lovemaking dripping out of me, when I realized. Victor still had my panties.

Quickly, I looked around for my bra and shirt, but only found my shirt. Had Gray stolen my bra? What the hell was wrong with them? I fastened my shirt up and used my ability to travel to my room so I wouldn’t have to go through the house without underwear. I’d get them back for this.

Served Cold

## Chapter 166 - The Vampire's Servant

I plotted for the rest of the evening. They thought they could get away with leaving me like that. I figured out the best revenge.

If I learned anything from my jaunt into madness, it was how to act like I wasn’t doing anything suspicious as I went about my evening. I cleaned up in my room and got new underclothes on. Then, I went to find Gray.

He was in the living room with Val, Preston, Cam, and Harmony. I went over to see how the spell conversion was going. They’d managed to combine the spells pretty well. It looked so smooth, you couldn’t even tell it was the combination of two spells.

“That’s impressive.” I murmured.

“Where were you, Echo?” Val asked.

“I went to my room for a while after my time in the garden with Gray. I just needed a little alone time.” I replied.

“He didn’t do anything, did he?”

“Val. You need to stop. Gray is my husband. We’re married in the eyes of supernatural law, just not human law. He’s going to take care of me forever. I promise. Don’t be mean. If he says we didn’t do anything, then we didn’t do anything.” I sighed.

Val looked at Gray. He hadn’t thought I would put it on him, but Gray picked up on it pretty well.

“I made you a promise, remember? If Echo needed time alone, it’s probably because there are so many people and she’s still not quite used to it.” Gray smiled.

“Alright.” Val said, sounding doubtful.

“How long do you think before we hear back from the coven leader?” I asked.

“It could take a day or two. I’m not holding my breath. We’re going to see about methods for contacting free witches in the area. I didn’t even know that was an option until the girls started talking about it at dinner. I think I’ll be a free witch. I only plan to marry my soulmate and I don’t want some coven leader telling me who I need to be marrying or trying to arrange something... again.” Val grumbled a little.

“There should be a place where they all frequent. We should ask Lila. She might know better than I would.” Preston said.

“Wow. Didn’t think I’d ever hear you suggest that we should talk to a dark witch, Uncle Preston.” Harmony giggled.

“She’s a valuable tool at the moment and she has an emotional stake in this because Marius is involved. I would never tell you not to use everything you can to get what you need. I would just ask you to stop short of going dark yourself.” Preston replied.

We found seats and started talking about how we should position everyone. We figured that I should hold hands with Gray and Victor and they should have Harmony and Val on either side of them. After that, we should try to space out Fenton’s descendants a little.

It took a little while to hammer out, because Cam would have a hard time with anyone holding Harmony’s hand who was male and not related to us. The best we could do was having her hold

hands with Victor, who Cam's wolf didn't see as competition, and any female witch that was sent to us.

If there was no female witch sent, then we would have Emmalyn or Amelia next to her. We figured that Fenton's descendants would have a stronger bond to him than descendants of his sister. So we were treating them as non-family members for the sake of the curse removal.

As we were chatting, Val's phone rang. He pulled it out of his pocket and looked at the caller ID. His eyes widened.

"Mrs. Layton. How can I help you?" He asked.

There was silence as he listened to the person on the other end of the line. I wondered who it was and looked around the room to see if anyone knew.

"Coven leader." Preston said.

"I see. Yes, that will be perfect. When can they be available?" Val asked politely.

More silence as he nodded. I bit my lips together in anticipation and gripped Gray's hand. There were witches who wanted to help!

"Great. I'll message you the address. They just need to hit the buzzer to be let in the gate. It would be fantastic to meet with them tomorrow. I promise no harm will come to them. Yes, Lila will be on her best behavior. If they come over around six in the evening they can meet the vampires. Yes, I can guarantee that the vampires will not try to feed on them or entrance them." Val promised.

We waited patiently as he listened to more of what she had to say. I couldn't believe we'd gotten the witches so soon. This was the best news we'd had in a while.

Val hung up and grinned at us. "We have two young witches who wanted to help."

"Were they the only ones or are we waiting on others?" Preston asked.

"The answers all came back as 'no' pretty fast. These two were at their graduation ceremony for witch training when they felt compelled to walk into the forest and started attacking someone. The description sounded like Amelia. They wanted to help because they didn't agree with the coven's decree that they wouldn't help at all with the other parts of the curse." Val explained.

"That's very brave of them. Going against your coven isn't something young witches will normally do." Preston murmured.

"They said they wanted to help and, because the coven leader is still hoping I'll take her daughter as my wife, it was put to the coven to decide on their own, since we don't need all of them. I guess attacking Amelia made these two decide they couldn't stand aside anymore. Thank



goodness. This means everything can be over sooner rather than later.” Val said in a relieved tone.

“Sounds like you want to move on.” Gray chuckled.

“I don’t do my soulmate search until I know that Echo’s safe. That will be when this curse is done and you’ve married her. I don’t care if it’s just human law. It’s how I was raised and I want to know she’s safe. I couldn’t keep her safe for so much of our life. I’ll even wait until Cam marries Harmony if that makes you think this is a little more equal.” Val replied.

“I’ll marry Harmony if it gets you off our backs about living together.” Cam scoffed.

“Living together?!” Val shouted.

“We can go to city hall as soon as this is over and get the license. Harmony can plan whatever she wants for the ceremony. We’re marked mates. That’s as good as husband and wife to most wolves. Most people just do a city hall wedding, because the bond is more important than the celebration.” Cam explained.

There was more bickering. Harmony chatted with me while the guys went at it. She wanted a small wedding, just close friends from the pack and family.

I told her what the Lunas were planning for the wedding between me and Gray. Harmony was excited to be my maid of honor. She told me the Lunas got her measurements before everyone moved in here.

Elise told me the next family dinner would be the first fitting for the dress and they had made it a little bigger than my first set of measurements to take into account the fact that I was still working on becoming healthy. She said that it would be easier to take it in than let it out. I didn’t know about that, but if she said so, it must be true.

Everyone was happy when we told them about the witches. Preston called Brian who said he would tell Brooke and they would be at the house around five. We were set to break the curse by Sunday at the latest.

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Soon, it was bedtime. I went and took a hot shower. There was some residual soreness from my encounter with Gray and Victor in the garden. Thank goodness for my rapid healing factor, or I don’t think I would be walking very well.

It just served to make me even more set on my revenge. I just needed to be sure what I was planning would work. My test would be when I did it to Gray.

I dressed in one of my pajama sets that had silky shorts and a tank top. They were cute, and just modest enough that my brother wouldn't throw a fit if he saw me in it, but it was skimpy enough that Victor would react the way I wanted him to.

Gray was already in bed when I came out of the closet after dressing. He smiled at me as I climbed in bed and cuddled up with him. Victor came in shortly after and slid into bed with us.

They wrapped me in their arms and told me how much they loved me. I sure hoped they felt that way after I got my revenge tonight. They deserved it for leaving me out in the garden to fend for myself without my bra and panties.

As Gray fell asleep, I mimicked his breathing and pretended to nod off as well. Victor kissed my head and slipped out of bed. I waited for him to close the door before I sat up.

Carefully, I reached down and got ahold of Gray's pajama pants and underwear. Then I used my ability to travel to the closet. I turned on the light in there and saw I had been successful.

The clothes were in my hand, but Gray wasn't. I peeked out of the closet and saw that he was still sleeping. I stifled a giggle before I enacted the next part of my plan.

Once Gray was comfortably settled, I made my way to Victor's office. I walked in and saw Victor at the desk with Talia. She looked over at me and tilted her head curiously.

"Echo, what's wrong?" Victor asked.

"I woke up and wanted to see you. I had a bad dream." I mumbled.

"Princess. I'm sorry. Why didn't you get Gray up?"

"Because it was about you, not about him." I pouted.

"Talia, would you give us some time?" He requested.

"Sure." She replied and got up, closing the door behind her.

"Come here, princess. Are you alright?" Victor asked.

I went and climbed in his lap and snuggled against him. Victor wrapped his arms around me. I slid my fingers down his chest and hooked my fingers into the waist of his pants, grabbing his belt and underwear.

"I didn't really have a nightmare, Victor. I just wanted to be alone with you for a few minutes. You know I didn't appreciate you leaving me out in the garden the way you did." I said softly.

"Mmm. You know I have work to do, Echo. I told you I was sorry and I gave you a lot of cuddles in bed tonight. Was it not enough?"

“Dear Goddess, could you not do this while I’m stuck in this cage?” Fenton growled.

I ignored him. This was important. Victor had to know why he was being punished.

“You stole my panties again, Victor. Then Gray stole my bra. I was stuck in the garden without any underclothes. That was very mean of the two of you.” I told him.

Victor chuckled. “I don’t mean to laugh, princess. I’m just getting a humorous picture in my head.”

“If I didn’t have the traveling ability, I would have had to try to make my way to my room without any underclothes. That would have been embarrassing, Victor. I don’t find it funny.” I stated firmly.

“Oh? And, shall I be punished for this?” He asked.

“Of course.” I whispered and grasped his shirt with my other hand. “Why else would I stay up late, if not to punish my naughty mates?”

He laughed and I grinned. Then I used my ability to travel to my closet with his clothes. I gathered Gray’s and headed back to the landing above the stairs as the shouting started.

“ECHO!!!” Victor yelled.

“What the fuck!?” Gray shouted a few moments later.

I heard Talia rushing to Victor’s office and I could tell when she opened the door, because she burst out laughing. I leaned over the railing to the entryway and waited. To my right, I heard doors open and people rushed out.

“Grayson? What on Earth are you doing?” I heard Victor ask.

“I’m wondering the same thing. I was sleeping in Echo’s bed, then I woke up naked in the TV room! What the hell is going on?” Gray answered.

More doors opened as everyone came to the landing and started asking me what was going on. I giggled in the confusion of everything. Gray and Victor came into the entryway using cushions to cover their sensitive parts.

Sean and Rosario started whistling at them. Harmony and Amelia started cat calling, much to the chagrin of their mates. Emmalyn was in hysterics.

“Why are you two naked?!” Val exclaimed.

“Ask your sister!” Gray growled.

Val looked at me.

“If you steal from me and leave me to get back to my room alone, I’ll do the same to you.” I told Gray and held up the handfuls of their clothing.

“What did you steal from my sister?” Val asked.

Gray blushed and looked away. Victor looked like he was trying not to laugh. At least he was amused.

“You’re going to be punished for this, Echo.” Victor warned.

“I don’t think so. You asked me if I was going to punish you for stealing from me and I told you I was. You knew you were in trouble. I’m just paying you back for what you did to me.” I stuck my tongue out at him.

“Alright, Echo. This has gone far enough. Give them back their clothes.” Preston chided. “I’m sure they learned their lesson.”

“Have you learned your lesson?” I asked.

“I promise not to steal from you again, Echo. Now, give me my clothes back.” Victor said.

“I promise not to steal again, too. I’m sorry, Echo. Please, give me my clothes back.” Gray answered in a shamed tone.

“He’s so modest for a werewolf.” Talia giggled.

“I’m mated. Only my mate is allowed to see me naked unless I’m shifting.” Gray insisted.

I dropped the clothes over the bannister. Victor moved quickly to grab his clothing and head back to his office. Gray missed his and had to bend over to pick them up, getting more whistles from Rosario, Sean, Finn, and Cam. There were more hoots and howls from the girls, too.

He disappeared briefly and reappeared quickly, dressed in his pajamas. There was a wicked look on his face. I squealed and ran for my room, Gray gave chase.

Gray caught me just inside my bedroom door and pulled me to him. I looked up into his eyes and I could see the glint of humor in them.

“You’re such a naughty girl.” He purred.

“You stole my bra.” I huffed.

“As soon as all these people are out of our house, I’m going to hide every stitch of your clothing where you’ll never find them.” Gray threatened.

“You wouldn’t dare!” I gasped.

“I would. You’ll have to go around the house in whatever you can borrow from Victor and me. Like that time when you wore my t-shirt and nothing else.” He grinned.

“You’re terrible.” I giggled.

“I’m exactly what you deserve. My naughty little dhampyr. Now, it’s time for bed. If I wake up naked in another part of this house, I’m going to find you and take you over my knee.” Gray warned.

We got into bed. Victor came back in to cuddle with me and return my panties. I fell asleep listening to them laughing about how I got back at them. Apparently, neither one was embarrassed at being naked, they were embarrassed about being called out over the theft. It was useful information for the next time I had to punish them.

Hunters Revealed

## Chapter 167 - The Vampire's Servant

[Bellamy]

As I was dealing with my newest batch of paperwork to move more ex-packs into Lune Rouge, my phone started ringing. I picked it up off my desk and saw a familiar number. I hadn’t been expecting a call so soon.

“What’s up, Troy?” I asked.

“We just got out to the hunter issue in Hallowed Moon’s region. This is bigger than we thought. They look like they’re getting ready to attack a powerful enemy. We’ve been watching them for the past two days. There are over twenty different hunters we’ve seen in and out of the house.” He reported.

“Shit. Do you think they’re planning on attacking Hallowed Moon?”

“With how many weapons boxes we’ve seen go into the house, I would say they were planning to attack something bigger, like Lune Rouge.” Troy said.

Aurora and I went deadly calm. An attack on our pack wouldn’t end well for the hunters. I would ensure there were no survivors. I would kill anyone who tried to harm my family.

I quickly sent a link to the head of my rogue guards to have them increase patrols. They were a more secretive force. Much better for patrolling and making people think we only had the more visible pack guards.

“Do you think they found out about me and Lucien? That could make hunters focus on us as a target. Have you been able to suss anything out about their target or mission?” I asked.

“No. We’ll be watching them and trying to get closer. We’ve got Crazy Derrick with us. Some of the hunters go out to a bar. We’re thinking of sending him in.” Troy told me.

“Sending Derrick would be a good idea. They wouldn’t know he wasn’t human. Your mission is to find out their target and report back as soon as possible. I’m sending another team for backup. Any requests?”

“Send a group with females. The house across from them is for sale. Perry looks old enough to be my father. Get us a younger female and an older female and we can move in seeming like a family moving into the neighborhood. It puts us at a good advantage.” Troy suggested.

“Alright. Text me the information for the house and I’ll get it purchased. I’m renting you a moving truck. Go to a second hand store to start filling it. You’ll need moving boxes with everything needed for setting up house. Hunters are more observant than most humans. You’ll really need to sell it. Make sure you shave really well and go get a haircut.” I ordered.

“Yes, Queen Bellamy.” He said and hung up.

Sending Crazy Derrick in was a great idea. He would probably even be able to get into the hunters’ house. That would put us at a huge advantage.

Derrick loved his nickname. He even got it tattooed in silver on his chest. That’s how crazy Derrick was. He had silver studs pierced through his nipples, several tattoos using silver infused ink, and a couple more piercings that were rumored, but I had never seen.

On top of that, he did crazy stuff. Derrick told everyone his great grandmother had been a shaman with an animal affinity. He said he can understand animals.

I know it’s possible to be a hybrid of a wolf and a witch, but the affinities rarely went past the first generation unless more witch was mixed in. That was what made Derrick’s claims seem strange. And his wolf was just as weird.

He would chase squirrels. When asked about it, Derrick explained that the squirrels all talked shit about werewolves and he had to defend our honor. He ate any squirrel that he caught.

Most notably, though, was the time Derrick ended up in the clinic after eating a leaf of Wolf’s Bane. Someone had dared him to and he decided it would be funny. He almost died. He seemed to do that every couple of months.

Derrick was sure to impress the hunters. A lot of them would test with colloidal silver. A liquid that contained silver.

It wasn't deadly, but it weakened our wolves and it burned like a bitch going down. Derrick would have drinking contests with his team. See, colloidal silver also made things have a stronger effect on wolves. He would drink alcohol with silver in it and it made him tipsy. He had built up a tolerance to silver laced alcohol.

If they put silver in his drink, Derrick would still be in his right mind instead of succumbing to the alcohol as quickly as other wolves might. That would be enough to convince most hunters that he was actually human instead of a wolf.

I pulled out my phone. It was nearly noon, so Victor would be asleep. I wanted to update him on everything as soon as possible. I set a notification on my phone to call Victor.

Trent was the next person who needed to know about the hunter threat. I dialed his number and waited for him to pick up.

“Queen Bellamy, to what do I owe the pleasure?” Trent asked.

“I’ve just received a call from my rogue team. They’ve seen something disturbing about the hunters in your area.” I said and told him everything my team had reported.

I gave him a rundown of the current plan. I wanted him to be prepared. More than twenty hunters usually meant it was a party planning to go after a pack.

“I’ll increase my patrols and have my warriors on standby. Gray’s stumbling into this hunters’ den may have saved our pack from an attack. Did he contact you about the further incident a few nights ago?” Trent questioned.

“Yes. It seemed like the girl was trying to figure things out for her apology, but I wouldn’t put anything past a hunter. No matter their age, hunters are dangerous. Derrick is our best hope for now. Send more guards to Victor’s home. The guards will have to figure out how to share space. I don’t want the kids unprotected.” I told him.

“You’re only a year or so older than them and you call them ‘the kids’.” He chuckled.

“Every one of those children has been protected far more than I ever was. I’ve been an adult longer than you have, Alpha Trent. They could be two years older than me and they’d still be children to me. I need to get a second team out to support my guys. Can you do anything about that house?” I asked.

“Yes. It’s owned by a company we work with. I’ll contact my friend there and see about selling it to you. We can probably get things settled in pretty short order. I’ll see if he’ll take it off the market for now. Maybe we can just rent it.” Trent offered.

“I would prefer to own it, but renting for now is acceptable. Call me if you need anything else. I’ll contact Victor. We need to take this threat very seriously.” I warned.

“Of course, Queen Bellamy. I’ll get some more warriors sent to the house for the vampires and get in touch with my contact. I’ll call you back later.” Trent promised.

“Thank you.” I replied and hung up.

I rubbed my temples. Werewolves didn’t get headaches, but I was pretty sure this was something like that. I was so frustrated that I wanted to scream.

Hunters being so close to my new friends frustrated me. I was grateful Dilly and Jean-Claude were back home, but also worried that it meant there was even less protection for Victor and his people. I was so torn as to what was the best way to protect them.

Quickly, I contacted one of my other teams and pulled them from the hunters they were tracking. These ones were highest priority as of right now.

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[Echo]

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It was a little after one in the afternoon when the buzzer went off in the entryway letting us know that someone was at the gate. We’d been in the living room making copies of the spell for everyone.

The morning had been a lot of fun. Everyone was teasing Victor and Gray. Val eventually gave up on trying to get me to tell him what they stole. I was pretty sure he had some guesses about what we were up to in the garden. He looked like he was pretty grumpy.

I got up and answered the buzzing.

“We’re warriors sent from Hallowed Moon. We need to meet with Grayson and Mistress Nightshade. It’s urgent.” The voice on the other end came.

After opening the gate, I went and got Gray. He looked as concerned as I felt. Why would Trent be sending warriors?

Gray and I met the warriors at the front door. There were at least ten of them. My heart climbed into my throat.

“Is there somewhere we can meet privately?” Their leader asked, seeing the curious onlookers.

“Follow me.” I directed and led them to the office.



Halfway to the office I heard some commotion. We turned around to see that one of the warriors was staring at Lisa. She stood frozen.

“Neil. Later. We need to work now.” The leader ordered.

“What’s going on?” I asked.

“She’s his mate. This is the first time they’ve seen each other.” Gray explained.

“Oh. I’m sure they can get to know each other as soon as we’re done here.” I smiled.

I took them into the office and went to sit behind Victor’s desk. Gray stood behind me. Each of the wolves sniffed the air and looked over at Fenton.

He was watching quietly. I was put off by how little he tried to upset anyone now that we got him to talk. It was like he was deflated.

The leader of the warriors stood in front of the desk. All of them were tall and a little imposing. Gray didn’t look nervous, so I tried to calm down as they closed the door.

“I’m Soren, leader of the second elite team from Hallowed Moon. We’re being assigned to protect the land of the Master of the territory. A threat has been revealed that puts gatherings of supernaturals, such as yours, in danger.” The leader started.

Gray and I listened quietly as he revealed what Bellamy’s rogues had uncovered. I covered my mouth and started shaking. Over twenty hunters.

They were bent on destroying supernaturals. I couldn’t imagine how we could fight a force so big. There weren’t that many of us and we lost several strong fighters if they attacked while the vampires were sleeping.

“I want to have my men look over this area and suggest security measures. One thing we know will have to change right away, is the location of the two omega females. Alpha Trent told us they were staying in a second house on the property. In normal circumstances, this would be fine, but they could be at risk if the hunters attacked while they were traveling between structures. Is it possible to move them into the house?” Soren asked.

“Yes. Gray and I can move to sleep in a different room. If they’re okay with sharing a bed, they can sleep in my room. The Master doesn’t use his bedroom at night, so we can move around a little. Once we send people back to their homes, we can give them rooms in the house if they want to stay with us.” I replied.

The warrior who had been staring at Lisa looked like he was struggling with something. He probably wanted her to move back to the pack lands so they could be together. I was sure she would be happy to go wherever he wanted.

“That’s a start. I’m going to have my men look around and we can meet back here in an hour or two. We should have a plan for keeping this place safe. We have the reports from Grayson about what training all of you have been through and how you’re training now that the wolves from Lune Rouge have left.” Soren said.

“Thank you, Soren. We’ll get our things moved. Can you have one of your men escort Lisa and Wendell to get their things out of the guest house?” I requested.

He chuckled. “Neil. Help your mate and her coworker get their things packed up. I want them moved into the main house within the hour.”

“Yes, sir.” Neil answered and left the room.

“We’ll be on our way, then.” Soren said with a bow and the men cleared out.

I stood up and hugged Gray. I remembered the hunters who’d come back when I couldn’t defend anyone. How afraid I was of them hurting me, or hurting Victor.

He held me tightly and rocked me slightly. I felt safe in Gray’s arms. I knew he would fight hard to save me. I would fight too. I wanted to help defend our home.

“Come on, angel. Let’s get our things together and change the bedding for the girls. I’m sure Lisa’s new mate doesn’t want her smelling like another male, let alone two.” Gray murmured.

I nodded and we left the office. After a stop at the linen closet, we went and changed the bedding before packing bags to take to Victor’s room. This was a longer stay than the previously planned one. We needed to know the girls were safe until the hunters were really gone.

In Victor’s closet, we set down our bags and started moving some of Victor’s clothes around to make room for ours. At least his closet wasn’t entirely full. I just needed to move a few things to make more space.

“Don’t worry, Echo. We have Bellamy’s team working on it and we have a team of elite warriors helping take care of the house, now. Once the vampires are up, we can tell them about the hunters.” Gray said.

“I know. I just keep worrying. Did I cause this somehow? Did they figure out what we are and that we were in their den? I wasn’t thinking straight when we went after the wards. What if there were cameras or something? What if someone saw me? I didn’t even look around to make sure no one saw. This is all my fault, Gray.” I replied tearfully.

He swept me into his arms and shushed me.

“Angel. We needed to break the wards. There was no other option. If this is anyone’s fault, it would be mine. I drove straight home after work the night Melissa and her family came in. They could have followed me. Who knows what they saw?” He told me.

“We’re in danger, aren’t we, Gray?” I whispered.

“I’m not going to lie, angel. This isn’t good, but we can come through anything as long as we’re together. When Victor wakes up, he’ll tell you the same thing.” Gray promised.

We got our things put away and headed back to the living room. We decided to wait on telling everyone until the rest of the house was awake. Until then, we helped with making copies of the spell.

A couple hours later, Soren pulled us back into the office where he revealed that his men found a few spots where it was possible we had been watched from. Some were outside of the fences, but there were some inside of the fences. That terrified me.

Someone was on our land, close to our home, and we didn’t realize it. He explained how hunters could get past guards, especially only two guards, like we had on the property. He assured us that this wouldn’t happen in the future.

Soren worked with the existing guards to set up a rotation with four to five guards switching off every eight hours. This would keep the guards fresher than twelve hour shifts, and would make the routines a little more unpredictable.

It was something and it made me feel a little better. Wendell and Lisa were settled into my room and went back to work. We still had to meet the new witches and get the plan for the last bit of the curse worked out.

The day felt like it slowed down and dragged on. I was afraid to go out and tend my garden, so I worked on cleaning Victor’s office. Anything to distract me from the fear and nervousness I felt.

Arrangements

## Chapter 168 - The Vampire's Servant

I was on my knees, washing the baseboards in Victor’s office, when my alarm went off. I jumped up to leave. Gray smiled.

“I’ll dump the dirty water, Echo, you go up and get Victor warmed up. I’m sure he’ll love seeing you there when he wakes.” He said.

“Thank you, Gray.” I replied and gave him a kiss on the cheek before I hurried out the door.

Rushing up the stairs, I was eager to get to Victor, to see him wake up, and to know both my mates were safely alive. I turned on the heated blanket and climbed into bed with him, Talia, and Finn. I was on the edge of the bed, but it didn't really matter.

Clinging to Victor, I put my head on his chest and closed my eyes waiting for the moment when I would hear his heart beat a little faster and he would wake up. I willed him to wake up sooner, but I knew there was every chance of him waking up later because of how late the sun went down now.

When his heart beat increased, I felt him stiffen. Victor's arms went around me and he held me tightly.

"You smell like strange wolves. What's happened while I was sleeping?" Victor asked.

"Trent sent a team of elite warriors over to help guard us. He said that the hunters were gathering forces and it looked like they were going after a big target. Bellamy should be calling to update you soon." I told him.

"Get out of the bed, princess. I need to get dressed and find out the threat to our territory. Talia, did you hear that?" Victor said.

"I did. Come on, Finn. We need to get moving." She commanded.

I got out of the bed and they rushed around to dress. It didn't take very long. I was grateful for vampire speed.

Victor pulled me with him to the office. We were met there by Soren and Gray. I was glad Gray had gotten Soren so I didn't have to try and hunt him down.

"Master Nightshade, I'm Soren Thompson. I'm the leader of the second highest ranked elite warrior team in Hallowed Moon. I'm here to help keep your people safe." Soren said.

"Thank you for coming so soon. I'm sorry I wasn't awake to greet you." Victor said, shaking Soren's hand.

Victor sat behind his desk and indicated the chair in front of him. Soren sat in one and Talia took the other. Finn stood by the door while Gray and I sat on the couch.

"It seems the hunter threat was more than we'd thought. What do you know?" Victor asked.

Soren told him what Trent had gone over. They pulled out a map of the property and Soren explained the places where they'd found 'instances of incursion'. He also told Victor what the person could have seen.

Because the windows are all tinted, there wasn't much they could see in the house, but I knew that Sean would open the windows to the library while he was reading sometimes. Goodness only knows what they could have seen.

The phone on Victor's desk started ringing. He glanced at the caller ID before answering it on speaker.

"Queen Bellamy, calling to let me know about this hunter issue?" Victor asked.

"Yes. It seems it was more severe than just one family. My guys just called me and another RV full of hunters has arrived. That takes our working estimate up to almost thirty. I worry that they're planning to come for us. It's only a few hours to get from there to here. I want to arrange a coordinated attack on them. Your vampires, my rogues, and the warriors of the pack. These hunters need to die." Bellamy growled.

"What have you got in mind?" Victor asked.

"I have someone working on infiltrating the hunters. Derrick has already said he's going to try making inroads tonight. Trent got my guys into the house across the street and my second team is on their way. They will start the process of moving into the house across the street. If the hunters are still gathering their forces, that means we have time to figure their plan of attack out." Bellamy said.

"I can claim the title of Master of the territory again once we deal with the cat. Do you think we have a few days?"

"Yeah. I'd say this wouldn't be fully pulled together for a week or two based on where they seem to be. We'll know more once Derrick gets in there. He can report back to us on where the hunters are with their plan." She replied.

"This is Soren Thompson, head of the second elite team in Hallowed Moon. We met when you were touring the pack, Queen Bellamy. My team is on-site to watch over everyone here. There is no need to worry, this property is safe." Soren added.

"Thank you, Mr. Thompson. I appreciate you taking care of our allies. I'll keep you up to date, Victor. I want you to call me once you have your title back. We can't afford to wait on this for too long." Bellamy warned.

"I understand the danger here. I'll inform everyone in the house about the issues we're facing and we'll stay away from the pack and our allies so no one can track us to them. The last thing we need is to lead them right to the fae or the pack lands. Grayson, that means you will have to call your family and let them know you won't be able to attend your family dinner." Victor said.

"I already texted my mom and let her know. Trent talked to our dad earlier, so she already knew about the hunters. Movements in and out of the pack lands are limited and we have the patrols stepping up." Gray told him.

“I’m going to call Silence and Talon. I need them to organize the vampires so we can get ready for the attack.” Victor said. “Talia, Soren, I need a few moments with Grayson and Echo. Would you mind?”

“I’ll go see to my men. We’re working on arrangements out in the guesthouse. Luckily, most of us are accustomed to sleeping on the ground.” Soren nodded and left.

“I can go fill everyone else in on what is going on. It would be best if everyone knew the danger so they don’t make a mistake that could cost lives.” Talia replied and closed the door behind her.

Victor got up from behind his desk and sat on the other side of me on the couch. He and Gray wrapped their arms around me and held me close to them. It may have seemed like they were trying to comfort me, but I was relatively calm in all this now.

Both were strong and effective. They really seemed like they knew what they were doing. I was impressed with both of them.

I could feel in our bond that both of them were worried. This cuddle was more for them than it was for me. I let them hold me without wiggling or trying to talk to them. They needed me and I knew I was able to do this for them.

“Don’t be scared, Echo. We’re going to keep you safe.” Victor murmured and kissed my temple.

“We’re going to make sure those hunters never get anywhere near you.” Gray promised and kissed me too.

“I know. You’re both amazing, intelligent, and brave. I’m not afraid because I know I have you with me.” I told them.

“Promise you’ll use your ability to travel to get as far from here as possible if things go wrong.” Gray whispered. “I don’t want to lose you.”

“I can’t promise that, Gray. I love you and Victor too much to let you fight on your own. I’ll be by your side. I’m stronger than I look.” I replied.

“I trust that you can hold your own, princess, but, if Grayson and I... if we aren’t able to protect you anymore, I want you to go to Bellamy or Marius. I don’t want you to try and avenge us. I want you to be safe.” Victor said softly.

My blood ran cold. The idea of losing both of them hurt my heart. I would be lost without them. They were my entire world now.

“I... I promise, Victor. I’ll run away if I lose you both.” My voice quivered as I spoke.

“I see now. All three of you are weak. Trembling in each other’s arms. Hunters shouldn’t be anything to fear now that you’ve faced down madness itself.” Fenton scoffed.

“Keep talking, Aimes. You’re dying soon. No one cares what you say anymore.” Gray told him.

“You knew he was saying something bad?” I asked.

“It’s in his tone. You can only spend so much time with a cat before you start to recognize the tone of the sounds they make and what they mean.” He said.

I could hear the buzzer for the intercom in the entryway. The witches must be arriving. Gray was the first one to pull away, followed by Victor.

They stood and helped me up. Victor smiled and kissed me gently.

“You go greet our guests. I’ll be there momentarily. Silence and Talon aren’t up yet, but Dennis is and I want to talk with him.” Victor murmured.

I nodded and took Gray’s hand. We walked out to the entry as the front door was being opened.

Brian, Hope, and a girl who had to be Brooke came in. Brooke was taller than me. She had the same blonde hair and freckles as her mother and Sean, but she was actually a little thicker looking. Like she was athletic.

Sean stepped forward and hugged his sister. She hugged him back while scolding him about not talking to her more and not trusting her with his secret. Rosario leaned against the archway into the living room.

“So, which one of these guys is your sweetie, and please don’t tell me it’s the old guy.” Brooke winked.

Rosario stepped forward and I watched her eye him appreciatively. She shook his hand and walked around him like she was examining him from every angle. Rosario and Sean were both in their human glamour. We felt it best for meeting new witches and for seeing Sean’s parents again.

“Very nice. Are you related to Rosario Adair? She was in Sean’s class ever since kindergarten. Real cutie. You look like her.” Brooke said with a smile.

“I am Rosario Adair. I’m fae. I use glamour to look like humans. I was a... curious... child. I wanted to know what it felt like to be treated as a girl and made my glamour look like a female version of myself.” Rosario explained.

“Wow, so you started dating a girl and she turned out to be a boy. Lucky you, Sean. That worked out.” She giggled.

“Actually, I became friends with Rosario and we didn’t start dating until after I found out he wasn’t a girl.” Sean told her.

“Are you happy? Does he make you happy, Sean?” Brooke asked.

He smiled and nodded. “He makes me the happiest I’ve ever been, Brooke.”

“Good. I’d hate to have to kick his ass for not making you happy. Where are your glasses? Or do you not need them anymore since your change? Can I see what you really look like, what you both really look like? This is so cool. Real live fairies!” She squealed.

I couldn’t help but laugh. I loved Sean’s sister and her excitement. She looked over at me with a grin.

“I’m Brooke. Who are you?” Brooke asked.

“I’m Echo, Sean’s friend.” I replied.

“Dad said you’re like a cousin or something, so you have to be my friend too. Sean and I share pretty much everything.” She winked.

Hope walked over to them and pulled Sean into a hug. He was stunned for a few moments, then hugged her back. His dad came over and put his hand on Sean’s shoulder, making him look up at him.

“I’m sorry for overreacting. You were right. This is your life and you are old enough to make decisions for your own happiness. I just... I was afraid. As a witch with no affinity, you were safer. You weren’t on the radar for the things and people who hunt supernaturals. I miss having you around and talking to you. We were always so close and this last week has killed me. Please forgive an old man for not having a more open mind.” Brian requested.

“It’s alright, Dad. I understand. It can be hard when you’re thrust into these situations. I wanted to think of a way to tell you that wouldn’t upset you, but not talking to you about it first was really not cool. You couldn’t have talked me out of it, but it would’ve given you time to cope with it.” Sean said.

His dad wrapped Sean and Hope in a hug. Brooke jumped on and joined in. I was happy that they’d worked it out. I wanted my friends to have good relationships with their families as much as possible.

“My goodness. What have I managed to walk in on?” Victor chuckled.

Everyone turned to look at Victor. Brian let go of his family and walked over to him, holding out his hand.

“I’m Brian Flowers. Sean’s father.” He said.

Victor took his hand and shook it firmly. I was proud of him for not looking at it and scoffing like he would have if a vampire had done that.



“Victor Nightshade, Master of the territory.” Victor smiled.

“Another vampire? I appreciate you taking in my son while he’s going through so many changes.” Brian smiled back.

“Sean is a delight to have in the household. He and Rosario are both dear friends of ours. We enjoy having them around.” Victor replied.

“Oh, wow! A vampire!” Brooke rushed over and bounced next to her father. “Do you sleep in a coffin? Do you really drink blood? Can you turn into a bat? Your eyes are purple! That’s so cool!”

“Brooke.” Sean groaned.

Victor chuckled. “I sleep in a bed, I really drink blood, I cannot turn into a bat. Thank you for the compliment. I’m Victor.”

“Brooke Flowers, Sean’s big sister.” She grinned.

“Let’s move this into the living room. The other witches should be here soon and I want everyone settled.” Talia announced.

We all started moving into the living room. Someone had rearranged the furniture a little. The second couch was pulled closer to the first and two of the armchairs were situated on either side of an ottoman.

Talia indicated them. “Victor, Echo, Gray, I want you to sit here. The three of you are the heads of this household.”

We sat down and everyone was finally settled when the buzzer for the gate rang again. I stood up.

“I’ll get it. Why don’t you all get started?” I said and made my way out to the entryway.

I hit the intercom button. “May I help you?”

“We’re here from the coven. We were told we’d be expected.” A familiar male voice said.

“I’ll open the gate. Park in the front and come to the door.” I replied.

I wondered who it was. I couldn’t quite place where I’d heard that voice before. I knew it, but where from?

When I heard the board in the porch creak, I opened the door and my jaw dropped right when theirs did. I couldn’t believe it.

“Echo? What are you doing here?”

Old Friends

## Chapter 169 - The Vampire's Servant

I hadn't been expecting the people standing in front of me. Terry scratched the top of his partially shaved head uncomfortably. Elle's blue hair was tied back in a ponytail and she was wearing all of her piercings on full display.

“You're witches?” I asked.

“You work for the Master of the territory?” Elle replied.

“Could you do this in the house? There are people who are sensitive to sunlight.” Victor said from a few feet behind me.

I blushed. “Please come in. Thank you for coming to help us with this spell.”

They came into the house and I closed the door. Victor approached us and stood next to me. Terry pulled Elle a little closer to him.

“You needn't be afraid. You are here as my allies, not as my donors. I do not take blood from those who are unwilling.” Victor assured them.

“Victor, these are two of my friends from school. Elle and Terry. Sean introduced them to me on my first day. Is this why you started pulling away from the group?” I asked.

“We were getting close to our graduation from training and we knew we wouldn't be able to leave the state because of the curse. We went to hang out with the other coven witches who were in our school. They'd be who we were around the most after everyone left.” Elle said.

“Elle? Terry?” Sean gasped as he walked into the entryway.

“Sean?! What? What are you doing here?” Elle asked.

“I'm helping break the curse. You're witches? Why didn't you tell me? We've been friends since kindergarten!”

“We weren't supposed to tell anyone. It's dangerous. What are you doing here, though?” Terry pressed.

“I was a witch without an affinity and I just found out a little while ago. I’m fae now, but I can still do witch magic.” Sean admitted.

“You got turned into a fae? Didn’t anyone ever tell you to be wary of fae offering gifts?” Terry scoffed.

“My soulmate is fae. I wanted to be with him.” Sean replied defensively.

“Him? I thought you were dating Rosario.” Elle said. “I knew my gaydar was going off. How did she take it when you broke the news? You’re not still dating her are you? Did you tell your parents? Who else knows? Why didn’t you tell me? We could have done Pride together. I’m always looking for a buddy to go with.”

“Sean? What’s going on?” Rosario asked as he came out.

“Let’s move this to the living room, we can do the introductions and explanations much more quickly.” Gray called out from the other room.

I giggled. It felt like we just did all of this a few minutes ago. He was probably getting frustrated, especially with the threat of hunters hanging over everyone.

We led them into the living room. Amelia’s eyes went wide.

“It’s the girl who tried to crispy critter me!” She exclaimed.

“OMG! I’m so, so sorry! I couldn’t control myself. I didn’t want my first action as a fully-fledged witch to be hurting someone else!” Elle replied.

“You were very lucky you had that shield to protect you.” Terry said. “My wind blades can be deadly. It wasn’t how I wanted to start my witching career either.”

“Don’t worry about it. I knew you couldn’t control it. It was really lucky Finn’s ability decided to come out because I was in danger. I’m Amelia.” She smiled.

We went around the room introducing everyone. Rosario had to put on his other glamour because Elle and Terry didn’t quite believe he was the girl they had grown up with. The feeling in the room was really friendly and lighthearted.

After everyone finished talking, we dug into the history of the curse and what had been done so far, to get Terry and Elle up to speed. They asked appropriate questions and seemed to be fairly businesslike. There was a sound a few minutes later in the entryway.

“Here’s where they all are!” Lila grinned from the doorway. “I found them, Daddy.”

“Lila.” Marius said in a warning tone.

“Sorry. I found them, Master.” She giggled.

“I swear to the Goddess, Lila, you’re not going to like what I do to you if you don’t stop this.” He growled.

“Hi, Lila. Hi, Papa. Thank you for coming.” I smiled and stood to give them each a hug.

“Lila the dark witch! Wow! I never thought I’d actually meet you.” Elle bounced.

“Oh! I love your hair and your piercings. You’re just so adorable!” Lila beamed.

Elle blushed and Terry chuckled. Marius came in and growled at Cam, making him get out of the chair he was in. Marius took Lila’s hand and guided her to the seat, stationing himself behind the chair.

Lila sat back and crossed her legs before taking Marius’ hand. He acted as if he didn’t even notice. She was wearing a low-cut shirt and seemed to be flashing the bite in the crook of her neck around.

She seemed proud to be wearing Marius’ mark. I was amused at it. I would need to wear a tank top to show off my mark. Not that I really wanted to at the moment. It was too dangerous.

When we’d questioned Fenton, she’d been too preoccupied to show off. Now, she was trying to make sure everyone saw it. Amelia shook her head at it.

“You’re not the only witch marked by a vampire.” She muttered.

I looked at her with wide eyes. She hadn’t been marked just yesterday. She must have let Finn mark her last night.

“Yes, but I’m the only one marked by this vampire. You should have more pride in your mark and your man. Most witches would expect it from me, as a dark witch. What are you going to do when all your light friends start asking if you’ve crossed over to the dark side? Or are you planning on never telling them? You shouldn’t hide your man away like that, little light witch.” Lila chided.

“I’m not ashamed. I just don’t know how to answer them if they accuse me of being dark now.” Amelia said softly.

“Tell them to mind their damned business. You know who you are and you’ll find witches who will accept you for your personality and not for your reputation. You already have everyone here. It’s that simple. If they meet your Solus Amor and decide you’re evil because of the preconception that vampires are inherently evil, then they aren’t worth your time.” Lila told her. “You’ve seen how good and sweet Echo is when she’s not crazy from a curse. There’s no way that she will ever be dark. She’s still a witch too, you know.”

“I forget because she’s a dhampyr more than she’s a witch.”

“Even if you’re only a little witchy, it makes you a witch. Just look at Brian, here. No affinity, still a witch. Harmony, still a witch. Even Sean is still a witch. That’s not important. What’s important is what you’re doing to your relationship when you try to hide away parts of it. You may not be as balls out into as I am, but you should have more pride in it. Were you sitting this far from him before other witches showed up?” Lila asked.

I hadn’t even noticed how she’d sat further away from Finn once Brian, Hope, and Brooke showed up. From the expression on Finn’s face, he hadn’t either. He suddenly closed down.

It was something I’d seen happen with Victor. Sometimes he would just close himself off if he needed to show a cool and confident face. I could imagine someone as open as Finn using that as a way to not to give away his real emotions.

“Amelia, we don’t care if you’re dating a vampire. I mean, we’re happy that you found someone you like, but you aren’t defined by the person you date. You make your decisions, not him. I was raised being told that vampires are evil and they only want to suck the blood of the innocent and turn them into vampires.” Brian said.

“I can assure all of you, we are not interested in drinking from unwilling donors, nor do we want to turn people into vampires all willy-nilly.” Victor smirked. “A glut of vampires means fewer resources for other vampires.”

“The important thing is if you’re happy. There are plenty of dark witches who would shun me for being with my Marius. We’re not so different from light witches, it’s just that light witches turn their bigotry into an argument against going dark and dark witches own their bigotry for what it is. I would be labeled as a necrophiliac. I don’t actually give a fuck, because I know that I’m happy.” Lila shrugged.

“Wow. You just zeroed in on my insecurity.” Amelia chuckled nervously.

“It’s a gift. You don’t get to be my age without being able to read people. Trust me, witchy-poo, it’s just easier to focus on your happiness and know in your heart and your works that you are a light witch.” Lila winked.

“Can we please focus on the curse? I would really like to only have one thing to worry about for a while.” Gray growled.

“Does anyone have a spray bottle so we can calm the dog down?” Lila scoffed.

Marius smirked. “Don’t rile up my daughter’s mate, Lila. I don’t know how housebroken he is. Victor lets him on the furniture, you don’t want him getting too excited.”

“Marius. Stop.” I said sternly.

He raised an eyebrow at me. “Or what?”

“Or I’ll be very upset with you.” I replied.

Marius tilted his head. He seemed very confused. Val and Harmony sucked in a breath.

“Is that something I should be worried about?” Marius asked.

“Echo isn’t as nice or lovey when she’s upset with people. You wouldn’t think it would bother you, but you see her being that way with others and you start to miss it. It’s like she doesn’t care about you anymore and it stings.” Harmony responded.

Lila chuckled. “That doesn’t seem so bad.”

I caught her eye and turned away from her. She gasped.

“It’s a form of persuasion.” Marius said. “The opposite of Harmony’s ability to make people want her to like them and feel happy in her presence.”

“It feels like back when my sister turned her back on me. I’m sorry, Echo. Please don’t be mad at me.” Lila pled.

I turned back to her. She was leaning forward and reaching for me. I smiled at her and she breathed a sigh of relief.

“That was intense. Stop teasing the wolf, Marius. You don’t want to feel that.” Lila shivered. “It was like I was being abandoned for the first time all over again.”

“This is why no one wants to upset Echo.” Val chuckled.

“I thought it was just because of how sweet and fragile she seems.” Marius smiled. “Very impressive, Echo. Another ability we can add to your training.”

“Anyway.” Gray said loudly. “Can we do the spell tonight or does everyone need a day to study it?”

“Sorry, Gray, you’re right. We’ve distracted ourselves enough. Let’s have everyone look it over. It’s not too difficult.” Preston replied.

We all looked at the spell. I could practically recite it with my eyes closed because I had helped write it a few times. I felt confident enough to do it tonight.

As everyone was reading, I looked around the room. Just a few months ago I wouldn’t have been able to guess that my social circle would grow so much. I never knew I could have so many friends and so much family that I cared about.

I looked down at my hand, where Gray's ring sat on my finger. Only three months ago, I had nothing to look forward to. I was afraid of what my future could be. Now, I was engaged to two men who truly loved me. My sister and brother were always nearby. I had a new father and, now, a stepmother who seemed to like me.

"What are you grinning about, angel?" Gray whispered.

"I'm happy." I told him quietly.

"I'm glad you're happy, but you should be focusing on the spell." He chuckled.

"I was so alone before, Gray. I'm really happy now. And I could recite the spell backward if I needed to. I'm ready when everyone else is." I smiled.

Gray and Victor each picked up one of my hands, making me drop the paper with the spell on it, and kissed my fingers. I looked at each of them. They were mine and no one could take them from me. I resolved then and there to kill any hunter I saw.

"I think we can do this. Brooke?" Brian said.

"Yeah. It has a good beat. I can totally recite this." She shrugged.

"It's pretty easy. I agree. This shouldn't be a big deal to do tonight." Terry said.

"Yeah. I got this too." Elle grinned. "Where are we doing this?"

"I'll go get the cage. You all want to push the furniture back?" Gray asked.

"I'll get salt for the protection circle. We don't want this magic escaping." Preston called out as he jogged out of the room.

Gray went to get the cage. Everyone moved the furniture and looked over the chart to see where they stood for the spell. I couldn't believe we were actually going to do it tonight. Then Victor could be the Master again. I hugged him. This was perfect.

Removing Fenton

## Chapter 170 - The Vampire's Servant

A few minutes later, Gray returned with the cage containing Fenton. I didn't know how he managed to get it through the office door, but I was glad he did. He was careful as he walked it to the center of the room.

Terry and Elle looked at Fenton curiously. I knew they were aware of what we were doing, but seeing the cat and hearing about the cat were two different things. Gray settled the cage down carefully and Fenton looked around the room.

Preston came in with containers of salt and had everyone get into their positions before he began carefully pouring the circle. I closed the doors to the living room, to keep my vacuum robot from destroying the circle. I went back and stood between Gray and Victor.

“I have to remove my glamour to do magic.” Sean said. “I can’t do both.”

“Go for it, Sean. I want to see what you look like now.” Brooke grinned.

His glamour faded and the lovely green of his skin appeared. His hair turned the more vibrant golden color and he looked a little thinner than he was in his glamour.

“Oh, Sean. You look so good.” Hope gasped.

She grabbed him and hugged him tight.

“Are you okay, Mom?” He asked.

“You smell like melons.” She chuckled tearfully. “I love you, Sean. I will always love you.”

“Thanks, Mom. You should get out of the circle before it’s sealed. We can talk more once this is all over. I’m glad you’re not mad at me.”

“I was never mad. I was just disappointed that you couldn’t talk to me and scared that you were in danger. I’m so glad you’re happy and you feel like yourself more now. Good luck, sweet boy.” Hope kissed his cheek and gave him another quick hug.

Hope went to where Marius, Talia, Rosario, Cam, and Finn were all standing against the wall. They insisted on watching, but needed to be far enough from the protection circle to not risk smudging it. Rosario reached out and grasped Hope’s hand.

“What’s this? Three more witches and Lila? Adding a vampire and a werewolf to your spell? You just can’t accept that nothing will work and you’re stuck with me?” Fenton snorted.

“We’re feeling pretty good about this.” Val replied.

“Oh, I’m sure that will make all the difference.” Fenton scoffed.

We all joined hands. I could feel power flowing already. Even before we started the spell, the power was immense.

“I’ve never felt anything quite like this.” Victor murmured.



“It’s amazing.” Gray grinned.

“This is definitely more power than a normal coven. I can feel the other magics swirling around with our magic. I never knew what vampire, werewolf, and fae magic felt like until now. It’s so different from that of just witches.” Preston said.

“We could cast so many powerful spells with this group.” Lila sighed. “It’s a shame we’re only doing this to get rid of Fenton.”

Fenton started pacing around his cage. If I had to describe it, I would say he looked nervous. It seemed he had finally decided to take us seriously. Maybe he could feel the power too.

Preston started up the chant and everyone joined in. I squeezed Gray and Victor’s hands as the power increased. I noticed that pretty much everyone was holding on a little tighter.

We watched as Fenton started rolling around and yowling. He was fighting the spell. I felt so bad for the kitty who was suffering as Fenton was actually fighting to stay in him.

Why would he fight like that? I thought he said he wanted to be dead. Was it just because he wanted it to be on his terms and no one else’s?

The spell was almost complete. We would keep our connection to each other after the chanting was done. Preston had told everyone it could take a little while to work.

We were all prepared to go for as long as possible to get Fenton out of the cat. I wondered how long it could take. I really hoped it would work.

When the chanting part was over, Fenton stopped writhing and yowling. He stood and laughed.

“I can’t believe you thought that would work. You can’t get rid of me.” He insisted. “I’m stuck here and you’re stuck with me. You can never remove me from this cat!”

“Fenton? Fen? Is that you?” A sweet voice asked.

“Guinevere?” He whispered.

A woman appeared next to the cage. She was small and fragile looking with dark brown hair and a sweet expression on her face. She had the same nose as me and Harmony. This was our great great-grandmother. I felt tears prick my eyes.

“Oh, Fen. What have you done?” She sighed. “Is this why I’ve had to wait so long for you?”

“You were waiting for me? Why? I wasn’t a good husband. I let you die.” Fenton replied.

“Of course I waited for you. I’ve always loved you Fenton. From the first moment I saw you. I refused two other proposals in favor of keeping my arrangement with you.” Guinevere smiled.

“We were just children when we first met. You never told me that.”

“Why would I? You already knew I doted on you endlessly and gave you whatever you requested. You had a big head from it, too.” She giggled. “Why are you a cat? Why did the children tell me you went dark? You promised me when I died that you’d take care of them. Grace told me what you did to her.”

“I gave her the life she deserved. She was an ungrateful child.”

“She was in love, Fen. She told me you took her from her soulmate. I only saw her briefly before she was swept away by a man she called Grigori.” Guinevere scowled.

“Grace and Grigori are together again?” I asked, feeling my heart in my throat.

“Yes. They were meant to be together and now they can be, forever.” She turned to me and covered her mouth with her hand. “Oh, you look just like my Grace did when she saw him. She went from being a battered looking old woman to being a sweet young thing. Are you one of her children?”

“I’m her great granddaughter. My name is Echo.” I told her.

Guinevere looked around the room and everyone introduced themselves and their relationship. When she saw Lila, she frowned.

“Lila.”

“Gwen.”

“Don’t call me that.” She hissed.

“I’m just here to help. I tried to help your daughter, but your husband wouldn’t listen to me.” Lila insisted.

“Thank you for trying to stand up for my daughter, but Fenton has never listened to anyone but himself. And he does love to listen to himself.” Guinevere chuckled.

“He certainly loved hearing himself speak.” Lila snorted.

“Guinevere, Lila, I can hear you, you know.” Fenton growled.

She turned to him. “All these people have come together against you. And you’re being stubborn. You must be tired by now. Isn’t being so angry all the time exhausting, my love?”

“I did it for you, my dove. I wanted to bring you back and give you the life you deserved.” He said softly.

“You didn’t do it for me, Fen. You did it for you. If it were for me, you would’ve cared for the children and given them all the love they deserved. You would’ve let Grace be with her soulmate. This was always for you. Do you think I would have come back to life and been happy that you killed people? That you forced our daughter into a life she didn’t want? That you cursed all our friends and all supernaturals? Really think of who I was, Fen.” Guinevere implored.

He was quiet for a while and I watched him process everything. Guinevere folded her hands in front of her and looked at him with a sad expression. Fenton shook his head.

“Maybe I was going dark before you ever died.” He scoffed.

“No. You were just an opinionated man who believed he always knew what was right. Your madness made going dark seem like the best option for getting what you wanted. And you always made sure to get what you wanted, no matter who you had to cross. You weren’t dark, but you weren’t the lightest witch to exist.” She said.

“It sounds like it was a good thing you got away from me, then.” Fenton replied.

“Never. You were my soulmate, Fen. I found that out when I passed. I loved you so deeply and so truly, even when you were difficult. I never wanted to lose you, Fenton. I waited for you. I waited so long. Our family and all these other beings have called me to come and bring you home to the Goddess.” Guinevere told him.

“Will I be allowed to stay with you? I’ve done so many bad things, my dove. I’m afraid she’ll punish me.” He admitted.

“You didn’t think being forced to live as a cat was punishment enough, Fenton? You were stripped of your magic and forced to live an undying life as a creature that was only threatening to field mice. You were being punished. The Goddess made your spells backfire like this. When you come home with me, you’ll stay by my side for eternity.” She explained.

“Go on, Fenton. You can be back with the woman you love and you have a chance to actually apologize to your daughter. Release the cat and move on to the next realm.” Lila urged.

Fenton chuckled mirthlessly. “The power of the triad gave me back my lost love. Just like the fire witch said they would. I’ll go with you. First, I want to apologize for the pain I caused everyone. I was overcome with so many feelings of anger and hate. They never really faded. Seeing all of you being so happy even in the face of what I created, made the pain of it worse. I am sorry. Echo, when I saw you and you looked so much like Grace, I was reminded of what I had lost and what I had thrown away. I wish you all the greatest happiness in the rest of your lives. Don’t let anger turn you like I did.”

“We’ll remember that, Fenton. Go, be with your family and the Goddess.” I told him.

“Take care of the cat. He’s a good mouser and he likes the wolf.” Fenton said.

“We will. Gray likes the cat, too.” I smiled.

Guinevere held out her hand and Fenton laid down. Light rose up from his body and soon I saw the form of a man. It solidified.

He looked a lot like Val, but with black hair like I had. He took Guinevere’s hand and kissed it gently before pulling her into his arms and burying his face in the curve of her neck. She wrapped her arms around his shoulders and held him.

They started to fade into glowing orbs that danced around each other and shoot up into the ceiling before they disappeared. I looked to the cat.

It was breathing heavily and seemed weak. We sealed the magic and let go of each other’s hands. Gray rushed over to the cage and pulled the cat out.

Victor wrapped an arm around me as Gray petted and cooed to the cat. The cat rubbed his face against Gray’s and meowed. It was just that, a meow. No words. No mockery. It was just a kitty cat meowing.

I was relieved that the spell had worked. The last spell would break once Fenton crossed over. Victor could have his territory back.

Preston broke the protection ring and it was like fresh air poured into the circle. I hadn’t even realized how thick the air had become with our magic. He went to open the doors and Wendell came in with a broom to sweep up the salt.

Everyone went up to give the cat a congratulatory scratch behind his ears. Gray started trying to think of names for him, but decades of being called Fenton seemed to sear the name into the cat’s head. Whenever someone said ‘Fenton’ he would meow.

“I’m sorry, Gray, it seems like your kitty has to be called Fenton.” I told him.

“I guess that’s fine. It will be a reminder to never let our anger get away from us like he did. Plus, I won’t accidentally call him the wrong name.”

“Does this mean we can move the cat out of my office?” Victor asked with a chuckle.

“Yeah. He’s going to be a free roaming cat. I want to get a cat door installed for him, so he can go adventure out in the yard. We need to get a vet and get him his shots. I hate to do it to another dude, but we might want to get him neutered too, so he doesn’t spray all over the place. I’ve been looking up a whole bunch about cats. We need some cat trees and a nice dark place for him to hide when he wants to be alone.” Gray grinned.

“A wolf that likes cats.” Lila snorted. “That’s kind of cute.”

“How many people are staying for dinner?” Wendell asked.

“Elle? Terry?” I asked.

“We need to go actually. Can we take a raincheck? Terry and I are moving our things to our apartment this weekend.” Elle blushed.

“You’re moving in together?!” I grinned.

“When the curse stopping soulmate spells from working ended, we did one. Turns out Terry and I found our soulmate all on our own.” She smiled.

“I’m so happy for you. Once we deal with some of the other issues in Victor’s territory, you should come over for dinner. We would love to have you... and not in the actual have you for dinner way, but have you over for dinner.” I added quickly.

They laughed. “We understand. See you later.”

With that, they left. Brian and Hope asked Rosario and Sean to come out to dinner with them and Brooke. They accepted, gratefully. I knew that it would be a good step forward in their relationship. Hope suggested they call Maeve and invite her as well.

Marius said he would stay, but he promised Lila dinner in Hawaii and breakfast in Paris. She had never been there. He hugged me, Val, and Harmony before taking Lila in his arms and disappearing.

“I’ll take you to see the ocean soon, angel.” Gray promised.

“That sounds amazing, Gray. I can’t wait to go.” I smiled.

“I will take you to places with a more active night life, of course.” Victor said as he took me in his arms. “We can dance all night.”

“That will certainly make me sleep all day.” I giggled.

“That’s the plan.” He winked and twirled me into Gray’s waiting arms.

“We can dance too. I’ll take you to aquariums, museums, amusement parks. All the things you need to do in the daylight.” Gray whispered into my ear as he danced me around.

We celebrated into the night and I was exhausted when it was finally bedtime. I fell asleep in Gray and Victor’s arms as Fenton curled up and started purring at the foot of the bed. It felt right. This was our family now.