

Chapter 159

"No shit." Galeb chuckled. "The little cunt deceived us all. Finally, a real reason to eliminate the boy. This crime will get him publicly executed. The Master is going to love this. A lot," Galeb added with relish.

"My thoughts exactly. We inform him upon his return," Mich agreed.

"We need to eliminate the girl. Fast," Razarr spoke up.

"Should we?" Galeb hesitated. "But. Lord Zaiper—"

"Lord Zaiper is in the mountains and won't return until tomorrow or the next, depending on how fast he concludes his dealings. That girl needs to be gone sooner than that. He always wanted that boy dead." Razarr rose and began to pace, his mind racing. "Her recovery should be over soon. This time, we kill her for good."

"That boy—girl, Emeriel—is as fast as a cheetah, maybe even faster. Have you forgotten?" Galeb's lip thinned. "Knowing he's a girl makes it even more embarrassing how she outran our men last time."

"Not this time," Razarr countered with the barest hint of a smile. "It's impossible to have that much energy immediately after heat recovery."

"Why the hurry?" Mich questioned, frowning. "Why eliminate her in secret when she can be publicly executed for her crimes?"

Because if Razarr's hunch was correct, that girl might be the grand king's Soulbond. She has to die. The sooner, the better.

"Deceiving the four rulers? Keeping such a secret? Making fools of them? Her crime is far too great," Mich argued. "Instead of assassination, we should make public execution the first option. We wait for the Master to return before making any move."

Razarr shook his head, determination hardened his features. "Get the men ready. Once she steps out of that estate, we kill her."

GRAND KING DAEMONIKAI

By midnight, Grand King Daemonikai stepped out of the carriage, moonlight glinting off the polished surface as Wegai bowed before him. Daemonikai strode forward, his legion of soldiers falling in behind him.

It had been a long journey, and all he wanted was to retreat to his residence for some much-needed rest.

Three whole days spent on werewolf soil was no easy feat. But this particular trip had been of paramount importance. After the official matters were concluded, King Azrael had confided in him about the escalating troubles with the vampire clans.

The cursed bloodsuckers were once again testing the boundaries of the werewolf lands, searching for vulnerabilities, eager to not only infiltrate but perhaps even claim territory.

Four of the creatures had been captured and eliminated, but Daemonikai knew this was a temporary solution. Urekai and Werewolves' enmity with vampires stretched back millennia, long before his own birth.

Daemonikai had always believed if any species were to uncover the secret of the Urekai's night of weakness and breach their defenses, it would be those cunning bloodsuckers. Certainly not humans.

Traitorous animals.

Yet, one human occupied his thoughts more than he cared to admit. Galilea.

She had been on his mind incessantly these past few days, even when he was supposed to be focused on critical matters in the werewolf court.

Everything about her was different.

In every way.

He might be centuries out of practice, but when it came to her, something didn't feel right. Or perhaps it felt too right.

He'd slept more soundly with her than he had in the past three months. There were nights he ran the woods, hunted for sport, had been so exhausted afterward, yet hadn't found rest.

But with Galilea, despite her demanding heat, he'd managed to find peaceful slumber in the brief moments between. Beside her, a human.

It was beyond comprehension.

Daemonikai had helped females through their heat before, but he'd never felt the urge to hold them close and never let go. Was it because he was unbonded? This was, after all, his first heat without Evie's bond.

Perhaps.

But unlikely.

This wasn't a bond issue, it was a her issue.

All his intense feelings centered around her... Galilea. Daemonikai couldn't explain it. Didn't want to think too much about it.

He didn't like the connections his mind was drawing, the implications they suggested. So he shut them down.

It was better not to dwell on things he didn't want answers to. He'd learned that long ago. Some things were better left unknown.

As he entered his quarters, his servants stood waiting, a bath already drawn. His bedchamber was scented with magnolia and borage, instead of the lavender he'd favored for centuries, the scent bringing Evie to mind.

"That will be all," Daemonikai dismissed the servants as he entered the tub, letting the warm, scented water envelop him, soothing his weary muscles.

His new choice of scented candles was beginning to seem like a bad idea too. Because now, Galilea came to mind. Again.

Images of Galilea in his arms flashed through his mind, causing a low growl to rumble in his chest. She had been so responsive, so utterly captivating every time she unraveled on his dick.

He hadn't thought it possible to find a female who craved his touch, who responded to it more than his bonded mate. But the experience with Galilea had been both exhilarating and humbling.

She reacted to his simplest touch, her body melting trustingly into his. Even with his hand wrapped around her neck in a death grip, her eyes held less fear and more... trust. He could bring her to climax with a mere caress, and somehow, he knew this was not solely due to her heat.

What was it about this girl that made him want to lock her away in his chambers and ravage her for weeks on end?

And why was he here in his bath, indulging in forbidden fantasies about someone else's betrothed? His dick swollen, strained between his legs, hungry for more of her.

Her heat is over. Let it go.

Remember, you should not be thinking too much about it, if you do not want the answer.

Daemonikai sighed. "Is Zaiper back from his trip?"

"No, your Grace," Wegai answered from behind the curtains, his shadow dancing on the fabric. "He's still in the mountains."

"Mmm." The water soothed Daemonikai's aching muscles.

"Should I summon your bloodhost? Surely you must be hungry after the... events of the past few days."

He was, but the hunger wasn't urgent. Sleep beckoned more strongly than feeding. And being in the company of Sinai tonight, no matter how brief, didn't appeal to him that much, either.

"Not tonight."

Leaning back against the tub, eyes closed, he thought of Vladya.

Concern for his friend cut like a fresh wound throbbing relentlessly. It had been over a week since Daemonikai last saw him, he needed to check on on his friend.

Vladya had disappeared for months at a time in the past, especially after a failed bonding, he shouldn't be so worried. Yet, he was.

This time felt different. A bad feeling brewed in his gut.

Tomorrow morning. He would check on Vladya first thing in the morning.

Sinking deeper into the tub, Daemonikai let the water ease the tension coiling in his biceps. Could it be another failed bonding ritual?

A knot of unease formed inside him.