

## Chapter 32

Waiting for the shoe to drop was excruciating. No one had shoved or insulted Ava all day, but she heard them whispering. This was one of those times she wished she was a wolf so she could hear what they were saying about her.

In Housekeeping, they were being taught to fold napkins, and even that failed to get her usual angry reaction. Her stomach got tighter with every second that passed as her fear of what was coming increased. She did everything she was told like a robot, and it was possibly the first Housekeeping lesson that hadn't ended with a detention.

At lunchtime, she made her way to sit in the quad. The thought of eating anything was making her feel sick.

The dean had taken one look at her and told her to get out of his office. Since she had no cuts or bruises, she had nothing to argue about how severely she had been hurt in the last training and was warned to stop taking up his valuable time. Penelope had cancelled all her pre-booked appointments

Her only hope of leaving had been crushed. There would be no one to save her from what was conning.

“Mind if I sit?”

She looked up and saw the vampire who’d had his arm broken in the first training session. He looked a lot different with his uniform on and no blood on his face

“Um sure.”

The vampire smiled at her as he sat next to her on the bench and offered his hand.

“Max,” he said.

“Ava.”

“Everyone knows your name,” he smiled. There was a hint of sadness in his eyes that caused her fear to return.

“I never got to thank you for what you did for me. Everyone would have left me there until I had recovered enough to take myself to the infirmary. You were lucky yesterday. They only took you because they thought you were dead.”

“Lucky?”

“Probably the wrong word. Sorry,” Max said.

They sat silently for a while, and Ava tried to keep her mind from spiraling by watching the students crossing the quad or sitting in groups and laughing with books or their lunch in front of them. This was what she had imagined college would look like for her—finally making friends and worrying about boys and assignments. Now, she was going to die before she got a chance to experience any of it.

“I can give you my blood,” the vampire offered.

His allure was not as strong as Penelope’s, so she knew he was very young. A strong vampire’s blood in the system would strengthen or heal anything. It was kind of him to offer, but Jared’s cream would probably do a better job of putting her back together.

“Thank you for offering, but I’ll just take what comes. I mean, they’re not allowed to actually kill me, are they?”

Max looked away without answering and her anxiety hit the roof. Would the coach allow it to go that far? Did he hate her that much just because she had talked about him behind his back. Or was it because of the usual werewolf–human prejudice?

“I don’t know why they’re doing this to you, but you should watch your back in your dorm room as well,” Max said.

What? Even in her private space, she couldn’t let her guard down? she was alone in her rooms and on the ground floor. Anyone could get to her through her window! Somebody could hurt her and disappear, and it would be days before anyone ever thought to look for her.

“I tried to look for someone stronger than me to help you, but none of them want to get involved in wolf business. It’s so fucked up”

Her shoulders sagged as the hopelessness overwhelmed her.

“I’ll be fine,” she lied.

Max studied her for a second before he shook his head.

“Max!”

She looked in the direction the voice had come from and saw a group of vampires waiting at library doors. The one who had spoken had a frown on his face.

“I hope you’ll be fine. Ava. I hope I see you tomorrow.”

With Max gone, she was alone with her thoughts until it was time to head to the training center to prepare the rooms. It felt like she was dressing up the place so someone would kill her in it. Emily didn’t look in her direction even once, and whenever she asked her what was wrong, the Omega completely ignored her. It hurt. She’d thought she’d made a friend for the first time in her life.

But she pushed that out of her head as the class filed in. She let out a sigh and resigned herself to her fate. Coach Baxter looked straight at her as he walked in, and something in her refused to look down. If she was dying today, then she wasn’t doing that bullshit anymore. She would go out on her own terms. He growled, his lips curled into a marl, but she still held his gaze. Let him come for her if he wanted. She was so done

with this shit, with feeling scared and anxious all the time. She would let them do what they wanted just to be done with it.

The Intermediate class filed in after him, but she noticed that Ezekiel was not there.

“Warm up! Now!” the coach barked.

Why did she have to torture herself with running when all she was going to do was get beaten up again? But she didn’t argue as she started doing the laps.

Maybe it was the adrenaline mixed with all the anxiety, but by the time Coach Baxter shouted at her to get off his fucking floor, she wasn’t wheezing as she usually did.

“Today I’m going to see how well you do against two opponents,” the coach shouted at the class.

Two! That was the game today!

Ava rolled her eyes and started moving even before the coach called her name.

“You’re very eager today, Miss Morgan,” Coach Raxter sneered

She didn’t respond, but she didn’t lower her eyes again. That was the greatest insult to the Alpha wolves. The coach’s eyes turned so cold, and he was snarling so much he was practically frothing.

“Dexter, Claire. Take your positions,” Coach barked.

She smirked as she finally looked away from him to face her opponents. Ezekiel’s girlfriend and the douchebag alpha who shoved her every time he walked past her.

‘I am Ava Morgan, daughter of Alpha Roland Morgan, and I don’t take shit from anyone!.’

She repeated the affirmations in her head as she took a fighting stance and waited for the whistle. Today was the day she would meet her birth father, after all.

“Are we doing this, or what! I don’t have all day to wait for this shit,” she snarled.