

Their Hidden Princess – Chapter 7

“Mr. Wolfham,” Lunerly said. He sounded completely unphased. My heart, however, was beating out of my chest. “Thank you for coming to my office amidst afternoon classes.”

“I had a break,” Maximus said. He pushed off the wall. “What was this about a princess?”

“Yes, I just spoke to the queen,” Lunerly continued. “She is appalled at your behavior towards the wolfless. The King consort must be respectful of all beings. She asked me to punish you for your dissections.”

Maximus immediately sneered at me. It was if he thought that trying to kill me was my fault. I crossed my arms over my chest and raised my eyebrow at him.

– “Weakness is a plague, Professor,” Maximus said

“Weakness is inevitable, Mr. Wolfham,” Lunerly countered. “And a King consort knows that and knows how to deal with it. So-” Lunerly pushed me forwards gently. “—you will learn to deal with it via Miss Smith. You will mentor her for the coming semester.”

I whipped around, jaw unhinged and stared at the professor. “You can’t be serious?”

“Deadly,” Lunerly said. “It is the queen’s wishes.”

Of course it was. She was trying to bait me to get engaged to the son-of -a-bitch. I had absolutely no intention of falling for her tricks.

But I needed Lunerly to think I was.

“Fine,” I spat.

Lunerly nodded. “That is all. You may return to your classes.” “Class is over,” Maximus barked. “Til walk you back to the dorms.”

“Fine!” I said again.

I marched off past him, making sure to bang into his shoulder in the way he had done to me. Twice now. But of course, the bastard barely moved. I thought I heard Lunerly chuckle behind me. I was tempted to turn around and throttle him too.

I barged out of the admissions building and began my tirade across the campus. I tried to keep my pace uncomfortably fast so Maximus couldn’t catch up to me. Unfortunately, he was a supernatural werewolf and I was just a girl. I saw him out of the corner of my vision and scoffed.

“I don’t need a fucking mentor,” I snapped. “I’m perfectly fine on my own. So let’s just stay in our own lanes and put on a show whenever Lunerly is around.”

“You’re acting like I volunteered,” Maximus scoffed. “I don’t want this any more than you do. But the Queen’s word is my word. I do what she says.”

If only he knew how little I cared for the Queen’s word.

“Plus,” he continued. “I need to spend my time training. Not watching your incompetent ass.”

“Incompetent ass that still managed to get a cut on you,” I countered.

Maximus growled, low and warning. “I need to train harder,” he grumbled. “The Gods should smite me for allowing a wolfless to maim me.”

I stopped short and whipped around to face him, catching him slightly off guard. He blinked in shock. Then his grimace was back.

“What do you have against the wolfless?” I snapped. “It’s not like I’ll bewolfless forever.”

Maximus blinked. “You truly know nothing do you?”

“I don’t know how that’s relevant,” I crossed my arms over my chest in defiance.

He shoved a hand through his short cropped hair and rolled his eyes.

He finally looked back at me and began to speak.

“Wolves were once slaves,” he said. “To vampires.”

“Vampires?” I laughed. How could this possibly get more ridiculous than werewolves?

Fucking vampires.

Maximus nodded sincerely. “Years ago, we finally won back our independence. But not without cost. There was a long war with the vampires. It was a war my elder brother fought in. He was stationed here, on campus. One clan of vampires attacked in the dead of night.

They sought out the wolfless specifically, looking to kill any attempt of increasing our forces by awakening new wolves.”

He paused and I watched his lip twitch in anger. He looked off behind me. “My brother guarded the wolfless,” he said softly. “He lost his arm in the process. Ripped clean from its socket by a vampire. It nearly cost him his life in the end.”

I couldn't help the horrified look creep on my face. Vampires were that strong? They could dismantle a full Alpha without even so much as a second glance.

"I'm so sorry," I whispered.

"Your apology is not needed," Maximus snapped back at me. "My brother was an honorable warrior. Still is. But the wolfless caused this." "The vampire took his arm though?" I frowned. I didn't like where this was going. He turned his eyes back to me. They shined in the afternoon sun.

"Because he was protecting those who could not protect themselves," he said. His voice was hard. "They needed someone to do it for them.

They were weak."

I bit my lip. He wasn't wrong but I still didn't agree with him. "So what" happened to the vampires?" I said.

"They were locked away by our Queen," he said. My mom. I schooled my face neutral. "But the Emperor vowed to return. He threatened the queen's livelihood. Yet, she prevailed and he was trapped in the shadows."

"How long has he been in there?" I asked gently.

- Maximus turned to look off again. "Eighteen years."

Eighteen years.

Exactly how long I'd been alive.

I couldn't help but think that it couldn't be a coincidence. Maybe there truly was a reason Victoria sent me off. Maybe she was trying to keep me safe.

"So that's why I hate the wolfless," Maximus said. "You are all weak and nothing more than humans." He ground his teeth together. "And humans do not belong with wolves."

He turned on his heel and took off towards the dorms. I supposed his reasons were valid. If my sibling had been killed defending someone weak then I supposed I'd be just as bitter as well.

However, I didn't understand his lack of empathy. Wasn't he wolfless at one point? Did he view himself as weak then? I pondered this the rest of the walk to my dorm. Maximus walked next to me in silence.

When we pushed into my dorm building, I thought I saw him frown.

Then we climbed the stairs to the third floor, I was certain I saw it.

When we stopped in front of my door, he finally said something.

“This is your room?”

“Yeah,” I said, pulling out my key. “Why? What’s wrong with it?”

As he was about to answer, the door flew open and a flurry of white and pink launched itself into my arms.