



## 159 THE TETHERED BOND

Early in the morning, Jasmine woke up still in Xaden's bedroom. **1**

She slowly got up and rubbed her eyes.

When she remembered the events of the previous night, she felt her heart sink instantly.

The serving girl who had been found almost dead in the middle of the room without her eyes in its socket and the Xaden's small opening up to her.

She wondered if the girl was okay.

She hoped she was okay.

Witchcraft, Xaden had said, but how sure could they be?

And how come she herself had slept off through the entire ordeal without waking up?

The only thing that had set her apart from being a suspect was the fact that she could never become a wolf.

And Xaden had claimed that it was also sneered with the blood of a wolf.

Jasmine thought of how he had told her about what had happened to his family, and her heart leaped for Joy.

He had opened up to her.

It had not been much, but it had been a start.

She wanted to keep it to herself, and then she remembered her father's warning about how he had told her to report to him and also use Xaden if she could.

She tensed up when she remembered and tried her best to push it to the back of her head.

The doors were open, and Xaden came in.

Her eyes lit up. "Alpha Xaden."

It fell when she saw the people rather than the person behind it.

It was the false witch.

The one who had claimed that the spy had been the one to kill Alexander.

Jasmine's grip tightened firmly into hard knuckles.

The woman came to her.

Xaden was not smiling back at her.

It was like he had returned to his old self, maintaining a distance from her and hating her.

She eyed the woman with dark dreads as she progressed forward.



"We meet again." The woman said with a smile that Jasmine did not warm up to.

The woman peeped at her hand. "What happened to you?"

Before Jasmine could respond to her question, the woman caught her arm, pulled it to her, and examined the deep cut.

Jasmine quickly withdrew her arm sharply from her grasp.

"Nothing. I just scratched it." Jasmine said.

"Are you certain?" The woman asked.

Jasmine frowned. "Why would I lie?"

"You tell me." The woman responded. 1

And then she turned away to face Xaden.

"Good morning." She said. "My lord." 1

He ignored her and then turned to the guards who had followed him.

"You may leave us." He informed. 1

She assumed that it included the dreadlocked woman, but she was wrong.

It was only the guards and the woman remained with her.

Marie pulled out a dagger and headed towards Xaden.



Jasmine jumped up on her feet, her heart racing.

"Stop." She said, and then she found herself running to them.

She used her body and hands to protect him from Marie. 1

"Do not touch him. You are a liar and a wicked person." Jasmine said.

Marie smiled. "Who said I was going to kill him?"

Xaden set Jasmine aside, surprising her, and then she realized how much she had just embarrassed herself.

She quickly stood aside and then watched as he handed his arm out to her.

Marie pulled out the dagger and slit his arm.

Jasmine jumped in shock. "Why would you do that-

Then Jasmine found herself in pain.

She screamed as she held onto her left arm and looked down.

Only to see that it was tearing up like a blade, slicing through her flesh and spilling blood.

It was happening, just like it had happened the first time.

She looked up and noticed that as Marie pulled



Xaden's dagger, it went down along with hers, spilling more blood.

Jasmine screamed in pain.

"That is enough." Xaden's voice boomed.

It was then Marie stopped.

Jasmine was able to take in heavy breaths now.

Once the cut on his own arm stopped, hers stopped instantly.

Xaden's arm healed immediately, but hers remained.

She was still reeling in shock, still confused.

"W-what just happened." She asked.

But no one paid her any heed.

"Why do you care? It is going to heal for you. It does not matter what happens to her. After all she is a slave." Marie said.

"I said it is enough," Xaden said.

Marie bowed. "Of course, my lord. Your wish is my command."

Marie turned to look at Jasmine's cut, and she went to her and grabbed her other arm.

"Do not touch me," Jasmine warned.

Jasmine rarely ever confronted people, but for



this woman who had so visibly lied, she wanted to fight.

"Stay still." The woman commanded, and then she slashed her dagger through the other hand that had been cut the previous day.

Jasmine cried in pain and wrung herself free.

Marie turned to see Xaden's arm.

There was a mark on where she had cut Jasmine. It was almost invisible, but it was there.

"The two of you are tethered together. Just like I had feared." Marie said. "If you die, she dies. If she is hurt, then you are too. But it is

Different in her case."

"What do you mean?"

"You are an Alpha. You saw that I cut you, and she immediately had the cut. But when I cut her, it hardly reflected on you. There was a small mark, yes, but no blood. It simply means that your mark as Alpha has made it harder for her pain to reflect on you."

Jasmine was just breathing heavily, confused.

Her arms were bleeding on both sides.

Then Xaden turned to face her. "I asked you what had happened, and you said you had cut yourself. You lied to me. Just like you always



have."

She shook her head. "No, my l-lord. I did not mean to. I saw how you were caring for me, and I-

"Caring for you?" He asked. "What made you think I was caring for you?" 4

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