

Chapter 14

The next morning I decided that it was time for a shower. After hacking a brush through my brown hair in the bathroom I inspected my neck, staring at the marks that had been burned into my skin when Hades had ripped the necklace off. No wonder people called him Hades. A name like Sebastian was far too normal for a beast like him. How could he rip away the last piece of Caleb when he knew how much it meant to me?

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Not sparing him another thought I stepped into the shower and turned on the water. Once my hair was thoroughly damp I ran the shampoo through it, loving the scent far more than the one my sister preferred, but the thought made my heart ache. Tabitha may have been the favorite and she had her annoying days, but I still missed her. I wondered how my parents explained my disappearance to her and I wondered if she thought she would ever see me again. Then I wondered if I would ever see any of them again. I knew they wouldn't want to see me unless they knew that Hades was dead and gone.

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I banished the idea, worried that I would cry. Regardless of what would happen in the future I had to deal with my situation now. I couldn't waste my time worrying about all of the what-ifs.

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When I was coconut scented from head to toe I slipped out of the shower and wrapped a fluffy white towel around my body. As I opened the door all the steam seeped out.

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And there was Hades, gawking at me, his animalistic amber eyes wide. I pulled the white towel around myself a little tighter as his eyes swept from my ankles up my smooth legs, over the towel, to my bare shoulders and wet hair.

"Fuck," Hades rumbled, his voice gravelly and low.

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"I thought you had left," I spat.

"I don't have any business to attend to."

"Shame," I bit back, then walked across the hall and slammed my bedroom door shut behind me.

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As I pulled on a pair of leggings and a hoodie I wondered if this would be my life now. If I would wake up every night to Hades's tortured screams just so I could spend my days avoiding him. The idea made me miserable and I decided that, if this was where I was going to spend the rest of my life, I deserved some space and respect too. I dutch braided my hair to help me look a little tougher, then I left the sanctuary of my bedroom and ventured into the kitchen.

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Ethel was there, sitting at the island while Hades stirred something in a sauce pan.

"Good morning," Ethel greeted with a beaming smile before her eyes darted over to Hades like she couldn't believe we were in the same room together. "I hope you liked what I bought you."

"I like it very much, thank you."

At that, Hades decided that he also wanted to be a part of the conversation.

"You can have anything you want. All you have to do is ask."

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I turned to him with an icy glare before smiling at Ethel. "I would really love some flower seeds and a couple pots the next time you go out."

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"Sure, how about you come and pick them out with me tomorrow?" Ethel suggested. She was trying her best to navigate the prickly situation and I wished she wasn't in the middle of this mess. She was too sweet for it.

"Hades has an audience with the king and queen tomorrow anyway, so you'd be stuck in the house by yourself. An outing would do you good!"

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I felt my heart leap at the news. Hades was going to meet with the king and queen. It didn't seem possible, but Hades didn't open his mouth to deny it. He just continued cooking. It seemed too lucky to be true. Surely, the king and queen didn't know what he was doing or, if they did, they hadn't been able to properly accuse him and arrest him for his unlawful acts. But I would tell them. I would tell them everything. And he would get thrown in prison for his countless crimes. I would return back to my pack as a hero. This was almost too easy.

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"Actually, could you pick some out for me?" I asked, grinning madly. "I would love to go with Hades?"

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"You would?" Hades said. But he didn't sound elated like I expected. He sounded suspicious.

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"Meeting the king and queen is a big deal," Ethel pushed, sounding just as wary as Hades. "They can be quite intense despite how young they are. Remember, these are the people who rule over all of the werewolf kingdom."

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"I know," I murmured, racking my brain for a feasible explanation. And I decided to prey on the softer, sweeter man I had seen yesterday, before my necklace was ripped off my person. "Maybe some time together, just the two of us, would do us some good? Besides, I've never met the king and queen. It's like every werewolf's dream to meet them. If it doesn't go well I won't ask again," I pleaded.

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"Charlotte, Ethel is right-" Hades began.

"Please, I promise I won't ask again."

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Hades ran his gaze over me, trying to find any ill intention to my sudden change of heart. And the poor fool was too optimistic to see that I was trying to bring him down.

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He nodded his head slow.

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I forced a brilliant smile as I went through all of the awful and vile things I could tell the queen to get my mate dealt with once and for all.

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~~~Distraction Section~~~

Hey everyone,

I hope you are all healthy and well. To pass the time when I'm at home I've started a little garden. So, as a twenty two year old, my hobbies include making puzzles, watching Downton Abbey, and gardening. I think I skipped my twenties and jumped right into my thirties.

a<sup>1</sup>

Question of the day: What is your chosen hobby? How long have you been doing it and how did you get into it?

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