

Chapter 19

Ethel bought me flower seeds and several pots which brought me more joy than any cut flower ever could. It was my solace for a couple of days.

Sometimes Hades would be gone during the day, doing whatever he did. I tried really hard not to think about what he could be doing when he was gone. Which other pack was he terrorizing today? I wouldn't let the thoughts get too far and with my hands covered in dirt they never did.

¹² a

But, even with him gone during the days I couldn't escape him. Every night was the same. No matter how normal he looked, no matter how big he smiled, the truth was revealed at night. There would be that awful metal sound and he would scream short, menacing sentences into the darkness. I could do nothing but pull the blankets tighter around me and pull my pillows around my head, trying to convince myself that this wasn't real.

¹⁶ a

And one night I decided that I had had enough. I was tired of curling myself into a ball, pretending that the man wailing on the other side didn't exist. I wanted answers. I knew that I was mated to a monster, I was sure that nothing else would surprise me anymore. I didn't know how wrong I was.

⁴ a

When he woke me up the second time with a shout I shoved all of the blankets off my body. Before I could fully wake up and convince myself that this was a bad idea I forced my body upright and planted my feet on the rug. Once I was on my feet I rubbed a hand over my eyes and progressed into the hallway, flipping a single switch along the way. The walk between the bedroom was too short for me to convince myself that I was doing the wrong thing. I wasn't afraid though, if anything, I was annoyed that I couldn't even sleep in peace in this damn house.

⁶ a

I didn't even wince when I pushed open his bedroom door, letting the light from the hallway pour over his bed.

And...nothing.

There wasn't any shouting. No thrashing. Hell, he wasn't even snoring and didn't seem to be bothered by the bright light suddenly filling his room. No one would've ever guessed that such awful noises came from here now.

But I surely couldn't have imagined it. There was no way that I had dreamed it. I had felt my tears on the pillow as I cried myself back to sleep. I had heard the wall rattle with the power of his voice. That was too vivid for any dream, even a horrific nightmare.

I slowly crept into the room, so sure that I would find a clue as to what was going on.

And the second I crossed the threshold I was stuck by the stench. It was the smell that wolves hated most and knew all too well. Silver and burning flesh. So distinctive and so feared. I should've fled right then, but I only moved closer.

And once I was within a few feet of his bed I was able to see where the smell was coming from. His arms were above his head, each wrist looped in silver chains that were still actively burning his flesh while he slept.

⁷ a

But his sleep didn't look very peaceful at all. His eyebrows were low and pinched together. The muscles in his arms were flexed, both fighting the silver and just strung tight with tension. He was breathing, but it wasn't coming out in so puffs like it should've been. He was holding it in, then exhaling rapidly.

What kind of sadist does this to themselves?

⁵⁹ a

Curious, I crept closer.

But I forgot, that, even while he was sleeping, I was tangling with an animal.

His arms jerked tight, causing the metal chain to strain against itself, make the headboard groan. His lips parted and a sound I had never heard exploded from him, sounding like something crossed between a scream and a roar. It was awful and gruesome, the kind of sound that made you feel sick by itself.

I gave out my own scream when I tried to scramble backwards and fell down, landing on my butt and elbows.

There was a flash of red so bright that it glowed in the dark. I let out another scream and skittered backwards. The beast was awake and he was staring right at me. I had become his target just like Caleb had.

⁴ a

And he was angry. Something vile bubbled out of his throat, rumbling through the room like a demon growling. The scent of the burning flesh intensified as he pulled, using all of his strength to pull on the metal. It was amazing the headboard held up, but I was sure it wouldn't last long. That meant that I wouldn't either.

"Oh no," I whimpered, still moving backwards. "Oh moon goddess, please save me from this monster that you have created."

⁶² a

The rumbling grew louder.

"I didn't ask for this. I didn't ask for any of this," I cried.

Then, the growling stopped. And there were no longer two red orbs glowing in the darkness.

I scrambled to my feet, stunned by the sudden stillness, but more than ready to flee. A creaky floorboard gave out my location. The movement on the bed made me wince.

"Char?" Hades whispered, his voice hoarse and so .

³³ a

I said nothing, just stared and took another step back.

"Char," he repeated, his voice louder and filled with something I didn't understand.

⁵⁰ a

I bolted out of that room.

³² a

~~~Question of the Day~~~

<sup>4</sup> a

What is your favorite summer activity?

<sup>106</sup> a

I have a love hate relationship with hiking. I live in bear country so bear safety is big and induces a fair amount of anxiety. I also am not the pinnacle of fitness so usually struggle a bit. However, I love getting beautiful pictures of places that other people have never been to.

<sup>7</sup> a

Also, we hit 10,000 reads! Woohoo! So i will be updating for three days in a row. Check back tomorrow and the day after for updates!