

## Chapter 121 - The Vampire's Servant

Training the next day was tough and I was thrilled about it. I wanted to learn to fight. I sparred with Jean-Claude. He got annoyed at how well I was reading him and started attacking harder and faster.

Dillon had taught me how to block and punch, so it made him more upset when he tried to hit me and got hit instead. He tried to kick my legs out from under me and I ended up jumping into the branches of the tree near us. It made Dillon laugh.

“Looks like your vampire tendencies are coming out. What’s your next move?” He called out.

Jean-Claude was in a defensive stance. I couldn’t see an opening. If I tried to jump behind him, he would be able to hit me before I landed. I smiled as I figured it out.

I jumped from the tree, as if I was trying to get behind him. I managed to throw my weight backward as he was turning and ended up behind him, hitting him in the back before springing away.

He turned and launched himself at me. I managed to leap and brought my knee down in the middle of his back, knocking him to the ground. Jumping off him, I landed a few feet away.

“Damn. I thought I had you.” He coughed. “You should fight her Dillon. She needs someone who fights like a vampire. I’m too slow.”

Dillon grinned at me. “You want to fight me, cookie?”

“That depends.” I smirked. “Are you going to go full speed with me?”

“She’s so cute when she’s confident like that.” He laughed. “Let’s do this, cookie. No time outs. This is until someone is down.”

I prepared myself as Jean-Claude moved away. Dillon attacked. I understood why they’d had him holding back, he was a lot faster than Jean-Claude. I had trouble following his movements.

The entire time, I had few chances to attack. I tried jumping away, but he leapt with me and ended up right where I landed, continuing his attack while I tried to block. I became frustrated at my futile efforts to block my body from his hits.

In my frustration, I didn't block as well as I should have and he knocked me back, before jumping behind me and sweeping my legs out from under me. I lay on the grass, panting and staring at the morning sky. I wondered if I could ever be good enough to win a fight against him.

"Good job, cookie. You did a lot better than anyone, without as much training as I have, should do. You even got a couple hits in. If you learn from this and apply what you learned, you should be able to beat me in a month or two." He smiled and reached out his hand.

"How long will you two be with us?" I asked.

"Six months, total. After that, it's up to you and Gray to keep training and keeping you ready to fight. I'll come visit next summer to see how you're doing. You, Victor, and Gray should come up to visit Lune Rouge. I think you'll love it up there. I know you'd love the gardens around the pack house." Dillon said, hauling me to my feet.

"I know Bellamy would love to have the three of you visit. She's probably told everyone about you by now." Jean-Claude chuckled.

"Everyone?"

"Her uncles, cousins, friends, probably her parents too. Bellamy is pretty chatty when it's gossipy. Like my mate here. Quiet when he needs to be and chatty the rest of the time." He replied.

"Hey! That's not fair. Gossip is the backbone of a solid friendship. Bemy and Cara know that." Dillon huffed. "We don't just grunt at each other like you and your friends."

I wanted to laugh. They were so funny and cute. The way they got closer while they were teasing each other. The way they smiled like they weren't insulting each other a little. The kiss that always ended the teasing.

That sort of relationship was where I wanted to be with Gray. Victor didn't do teasing well, but Gray was always fun. I wondered how his training was going as we walked back to the house.

It wasn't a long wait to find out. Talia stood in the kitchen while Gray was sprawled out in a chair at the kitchen table. He looked like he had been beaten up by a gang of other wolves.

"Gray! Are you alright?!" I asked, rushing to his side.

"I'll be healed in time for school. Don't worry, angel." He smiled painfully.

"Talia. Why did you beat him up so bad?"

She shrugged. "I got bored. I didn't break anything. He's a healthy young wolf and will heal quickly."

“She can’t go easy on me, angel. I need to be able to fight Victor. I’ve never fought a vampire before Sunday morning. She let me off easy yesterday. Trust me, I’m fine with this.” Gray said.

“We’ll get him up to his room. Victor’s still awake, Echo. You need to get away from Gray.” Dillon told me quietly.

I hated not being able to take care of my injured mate. I knew it was to keep Victor from trying to hurt him more, but it didn’t make me any less upset. I backed away and let the men help Gray to stand.

“Everything will be fine. This is only a temporary situation, Echo. Soon, Victor will be back to normal and you will be able to coddle Gray as much as you desire.” Talia said, taking my hand.

“I know. This is just a lot harder than I thought it would be.” I admitted.

“Of course it is. Your first instinct is to take care of the people you love. That means tending their wounds. Don’t take this too hard. Everything will work out. I won’t let Victor die, Echo. I already turned him against his will. I’m not going to let him find love just to lose it again.” She whispered.

“I need to go get ready for school. I believe you, Talia. I know that you’ll try your hardest.”

“NO. I will NOT let Victor be killed by this curse. Even if I have to burn this territory to the ground. I will not lose my child.” She growled and stormed out of the room.

Quietly, I headed to my room to shower and change for the day. I hated feeling weak, but I did after the workout I had. Breakfast was an event, because I could barely lift my spoon. Victor ended up feeding me. It seemed to make him happy.

Gray drove me out to the bus stop. He was careful not to touch me until we were too far to be seen from the house. At the stop, he slipped his arms around me. I loved being held by him and it felt more precious because we couldn’t do it whenever the urge hit us.

“Here comes your bus, Echo. I’ll see you at school.” He murmured, letting me go.

“You’ll give me a hug when I get there, right?” I asked.

“Of course, angel. I miss holding you.” Gray said.

The bus stopped and the door opened. I gave a final glance to Gray’s retreating form as I boarded. I hurried to my seat. Rosario was sitting in the seat I normally shared with Sean. He wouldn’t be on the bus today, since he was driving his mom’s car to school.

Rosario smiled at me and scooted over. “You look like you had an eventful morning.”

“I had training this morning. I’m exhausted.” I sighed.

“There’s a bruise on your neck, Echo. Take your hair out of the ponytail and let it lay flat, or someone will report it.”

“Thanks, Rosario.” I replied, taking my hair out of the ponytail and smoothing it over my neck.

“No problem. I have the benefit of glamour to hide my bruises.” He said.

We rode awkwardly for a while. I didn’t like the sound of what he was saying. Did someone hurt him, or did he just train a lot?

“I’m... I’m thinking of asking Val and Harmony to come live with me.” I said, changing the subject.

“That’s a great idea. Maybe I should move in with you too, until the curse is broken. We can keep the whole team together.” Rosario grinned.

“We’d have to move Sean in too.” I told him. “If we want to have the whole team together. I don’t know if we’d have the room for that.”

“He and I could always share a room.” He whispered.

“So this is all a plan to get Sean into bed with you?” I laughed.

Rosario winked. “I had to try.”

We laughed about it for the rest of the trip to school. When we arrived, Sean and Gray were waiting together. Rosario and I hurried over to them.

Gray kissed me deeply. There were some catcalls from the students around us. I missed kissing him, and it had only been a day. We walked into the school and I put my things away before heading to my homeroom class.

There were some larger boys all standing around where Sean was sitting. I approached them. My seat was hidden by their bodies.

“I don’t know how you got her to date you, man. None of us could. What’s your secret?” One of the boys asked.

“We just have similar interests. It just took us getting the same friend for us to figure out how much we had in common. I can’t help you.” Sean shrugged.

“She wears heels all the time. Don’t you hate having her tower over you?” Another asked.

“No. Her legs are gorgeous, just like the rest of her. If she likes it, I don’t mind.” He answered.

“Excuse me.” I said. “You’re blocking my seat.”

“In a second, baby.” The first boy said.

I raised my eyebrow at him. The second boy looked me up and down before turning his attention back to Sean. There was a third who didn't even acknowledge me.

“Hey, that's my friend let her have her seat.” Sean told them.

The boys sighed and moved away so I could get to my desk. I sat down and pulled out a notebook where I'd been keeping notes on the curse. I listened to the boys badger Sean for more information on Rosario.

He was always curt and kept his answers short and respectful. They tried to get him to tell them about how far he'd gotten with Rosario and talk to them about her body, or his. They kept asking if he was 'packing' something. Sean sneered.

“The bell rang, gentlemen. As interesting as it is to hear you questioning a fellow student on his equipment. Which, I'm pretty sure, is sexual harassment. You need to go to your seats.” Mr. Taylor ordered.

The boys grumbled, but walked to their desks. Mr. Taylor went over the announcements. For the day and let us do what we wanted, with the condition that no one sexually harass anyone else. That made the other students laugh and the large boys blush.

I leaned over to Sean. “Did you get my email last night?”

“Yeah. I stayed up late getting your information transferred over. We need to talk to this Lila person. If she's in charge of deciphering my dad's notebooks, she will know a lot more. Do you think that she'll talk to us?” He asked.

“I don't know. No one told her not to, but from what I understand, Lila doesn't do anything without a price. She's not a light witch, she's a dark witch.” I explained.

“We may not have a lot, but we might have something she wants.” Sean shrugged. “It couldn't hurt to ask.”

“True. We need all the help we can get if we're going to break this curse.” I said.

The bell rang and we packed up our things. The rest of the day went quickly. Teachers were letting us work on our projects in most classes, in some people were giving presentations.

I met up with everyone at lunch. I was eager to talk to Val and Harmony together. I sat down across from them. They looked at me oddly. Normally, I would sit next to one of them.

Rosario sat next to me and Sean on his other side. Elle and Terry eyed us a little as they went to sit somewhere else. I looked over at Sean.

“Is there something wrong with Elle and Terry?” I asked.

“They keep whispering to each other in the classes I have with them. I have no idea. Ever since last week, they’ve been a little weird. On game night, they were a bit distant. Maybe they’re just worried about maintaining friendships after school ends. Some people break away from their friend groups before the end of school.” Sean said.

“That doesn’t seem right. Something feels wrong. I can’t put my finger on it.” I sighed.

“We’ll work on our relationship with them later. Right now, we need to work on the curse.” Sean stated firmly.

We went over the information I’d sent out last night. We mapped it out on the timeline and the diagram of effects. There were a couple ideas, but nothing solid.

Val said he would take the name of the spell we knew to our uncle. He was hopeful that our uncle would give him more information about it and about breaking that spell. Soon, we were finished with our update and lunch.

“Harmony, Val. I wanted to ask if you two would move into the house with us. Cam can come too. I think we can explore our abilities together better if we’re actually together.” I offered.

They looked at each other with worried glances. “Why don’t you come live at the pack house with us? Our uncles are there, they came to see us, not to live with Trent’s pack.” Harmony said.

“That might be better, Echo. I don’t know how I’d feel about seeing you and your mates together. I’ve seen how Cam and Harmony can get....” Val winced.

I put my hands out to them. “Please. Our uncles can come live at the house too. They just have to promise not to hurt the vampires. I’m not as handsy as Harmony is with Cam. Please.”

Val smiled a little and put his hand in mine. Harmony sighed and did the same. Val’s smile widened and he took Harmony’s other hand.

Something like a breeze swept around the room. Suddenly, two students on opposite sides of the cafeteria started sniffing the air. They got up and turned toward each other.

The two students started walking toward each other, dazed. There weren’t many people in the cafeteria, but everyone who was, watched as they stopped a foot away from each other. The look on their faces was a little confusion and a lot of happiness.

Val and Harmony turned their heads to watch while we all still held hands. The boy put out his hand to the girl. She reached out and touched him gingerly, then jumped a little. Their smiles widened.

“Mate.” The boy whispered.

“Yes, mate.” The girl whispered back.

“That’s not possible.” Gray said. “They’re only seventeen.”

I pulled my hand from Harmony’s and placed it on Gray’s arm. He looked at me as the sparks of our connection jumped more actively than they ever had before. I looked around, all the wolves in the cafeteria were touching their mates as if they were compelled to.

“The bond is stronger.” Cam whispered.

“How did that happen?” Rosario asked.

“It happened when they all held hands. They haven’t done that since we had the suppression spells removed.” Gray said.

The bell signaling the end of lunch rang, breaking up whatever we were on to. We had to finish our classes for the day. We all groaned.

“Find out who they are and keep an eye on them.” Gray ordered Cam.

“Got it.”

“We’ll move in with you.” Harmony said. “Maybe this is how we can break the curse. Or, at least push it back.”

“We might be able to bring Victor back.” I whispered.

“Come on, angel. Let’s get to class. Victor’s gonna love this news.” Gray grinned.

I kissed him passionately. My excitement was overwhelming. I just had to meet with Fenton Aimes III and then I could go home and tell everyone what we did today.

Meeting Mr. Aimes

## Chapter 122 - The Vampire's Servant

After school, Gray kissed me goodbye before he headed off to work. Sean and I met up in front of the school and he led me to the car. I couldn’t wait to see his great-uncle. It would work out. I just knew it.

We got in and buckled up before heading for the nursing home. Sean gave me a bit of a rundown on his great-uncle. I nodded as I listened.

“Most of all, I need to warn you about his cat. The Old Man. The thing is older than me. I don’t know how he’s still around. Now that I know my family is full of witches, maybe he’s Uncle Fenton’s familiar. The Old Man hates anyone who isn’t family. Don’t worry if he won’t come over to be pet. Be careful, though, he bites.” Sean said.

“Alright. I won’t pet the cat.” I smiled.

“You’re still riding the high from lunch.” He chuckled.

I nodded and smiled wider. If having my sister and brother around would help keep the curse from taking Victor any further from me, then I was thrilled they’d accepted. I just wanted to be around them, and it led to a break in the curse. It may just be a small one, but it was more than we had before.

A little while later, we were pulling into the parking lot of a large building. It had three stories and a lower level that seemed huge. We parked and I looked around as I got out of the car.

“This is an independent living home. Even though he’s a little over one hundred, my great-uncle is a very independent man. Come on.” Sean said.

I followed him to a covered drive and in the sliding glass doors. There was a long reception desk. There were a few ladies standing behind the desk greeting people.

“Sean! We weren’t expecting you! You usually come on the weekend visitations.” A pretty woman behind the desk said.

“I wanted to introduce my girlfriend to Uncle Fenton.” Sean smiled at her.

I waved a little and wrapped myself around Sean’s arm. She grinned. I thought she would send us away because I wasn’t related, instead, she waved over another lady.

“Sean has a girlfriend, Desi! Come see her! She’s so cute!” The woman squealed.

“Little Sean has a girlfriend?! I’m so happy for you. I always said there was a girl out there who would want a sweet boy like you. You know he comes to visit his great-uncle practically every weekend? He even takes that nasty cat to the vet for Mr. Aimes.” Desi grinned.

“This is Desi and Remi. Remi is Desi’s little sister. She’s been here for three years, but Desi’s been here since I was seven.” Sean told me with a blush.

“I’m Echo. It’s nice to meet you both.” I said with a soft smile.

“She’s precious, Sean. No wonder you brought her to meet Mr. Aimes. He’s just going to adore her.” Remi bounced a little.

“You know the rules about outside guests, Sean.” Desi said solemnly.



“I have a letter from my father. He called my great-uncle so he’s not surprised. We took care of all the formalities. We just need your okay, Desi.” Sean winked.

“The little charmer. Of course you thought of everything. Let me see the letter and I need Echo’s ID.” She waved us closer.

I pulled my ID out of my backpack and handed it to her. She looked at the letter and the ID closely. I gripped Sean’s hand tightly. He squeezed back, like he was telling me to relax.

“Alright. Go ahead. Supper is at five. Make sure your uncle knows to leave that cat in his room. He isn’t allowed in the dining room.”

“Did he try to bring The Old Man down in his jacket again?” Sean laughed.

“At least once a week.” Desi sighed.

Remi giggled. “Any night we do fish. I keep telling Desi to just send a double portion of dinner up to him, but she won’t so we have to chase a cat around during dinner service once a week.”

I couldn’t help but laugh at the idea of that. I was betting the cat didn’t like it any more than they did. It made me wish I’d had some sort of treat for the cat.

Sean pulled me through the lobby, saying hello to the occasional older person who called out to him. I loved seeing him like this. He was certainly popular with the people in the home.

We boarded the elevator. I hadn’t been in one before, but Harmony explained it to me once. Sean hit the button with the number three on it and the elevator lurched a little before it started going up. I gripped the side rails.

“Are you okay, Echo?” Sean asked.

“This is the first time I’ve been in an elevator.” I admitted. “It’s weird.”

He chuckled a little. “You’ll get used to it. Just stand like you normally do. This one has a bit of a rough spot, it’s not breaking or dropping, just old.”

I didn’t understand what he meant until the elevator dinged for the third floor then shook and dropped a little. I squealed and grabbed onto Sean. He sighed.

“You’re safe, Echo. I told you, it’s a bit of a rough stop. Come on.” Sean said, pulling me off the elevator.

We walked down the hall until Sean stopped at a door. He knocked and we waited. After a few minutes, an older man answered.

He had mostly white hair with some darker gray bits in it. The hair ringed around the back of his head. He had hazel looking eyes and a friendly smile. He was shorter than me and a little hunched over as he stood in front of us.

“Sean? There you are, my boy. Is this the girl you wanted me to meet? She’s a little young for me, but I’ll make her feel like a queen.” Fenton Aimes III chuckled.

“Very funny, Uncle Fenton. This is Echo.” Sean told him.

“Come in, no point visiting in the hallway and my old bones don’t like standing for too long anymore.” He said.

We walked into his home. It was small. There was a little kitchen to the left and a two seater table on the linoleum. Past that was a tiny living room with a couch and a recliner around a coffee table, both were pointed at a television that was currently off. A sliding glass door behind it led to a balcony and there was an open door off to the side. I assumed that was his bedroom.

Sean and I sat on the couch. His great-uncle groaned a little as he settled into the recliner. He indicated a plate of sandwich cookies and two cans of apple juice.

“I’m not supposed to have these, but Remi snuck them to me when I told her I was expecting guests today.” Fenton winked.

“Thank you.” I replied.

“You got yourself a cute little girlfriend, my boy.” He told Sean.

“She’s not my girlfriend, Uncle Fenton. Just my friend.”

“Oh.” Fenton sighed a little dejected.

I pulled out my phone and pulled up a picture I’d taken of Rosario and Sean. I handed it to Fenton with a smile.

“That’s Sean’s girlfriend.” I explained.

“Damn, boy. She looks like a model. How’d you manage that? The old Aimes charm?” He chuckled.

“Echo.” Sean hissed.

“Oh, your friend played wing woman. Understandable. Sometimes it takes a girl to get a girl.”

I giggled. “Rosario and Sean are the cutest couple. Maybe he can bring her to meet you sometime.”

“I’d like that. I never had kids and grandkids of my own. Sean is like my own kiddo. I want to see him happy before I go.” Fenton said softly.

“No talking about that. We needed to see you about something important.” Sean said.

Suddenly, a huge black cat jumped up on the coffee table. He sat facing us. His head was wide and sleek. The rest of his body was thick, but not entirely fat. His paws seemed large as he looked over at Sean.

It was like the cat was saying hello to Sean. He blinked at him and nodded. Then he turned to me.

The only experience I’d had with cats was a few strays that came into the yard from time to time. I remembered Sean’s warnings. I stayed still as the cat looked me over, his eyes dilating until there was only a thin amber line around his huge pupils.

He put his paw up and motioned with it, like he was trying to scratch at something. I reached out my hand cautiously. When it got close to him, The Old Man sniffed it and hissed. I drew my hand back quickly.

“Old Man! That’s not nice, you asked to sniff her.” Fenton scolded.

The cat laid his ears back and hissed again, at Fenton this time. He turned back to me with his ears back and watched me carefully. I put my hands in my lap and didn’t make eye contact with him.

“It’s alright, Mr. Aimes. I’m part werewolf. That might have frightened him.” I explained.

Fenton looked up at me in shock, then to Sean. “I thought your dad was keeping you away from the supernaturals.”

“I ended up surrounded by them. Dad couldn’t keep it from me forever. We’re here about the curse, Uncle Fenton. I want to try and break it.” Sean said.

“Why? Are your friends pressuring you to do this? What my grandfather did, is irreversible. They just need to deal with that. The only one who knows about what went into the curse is dead.” Fenton grumbled.

“My friends aren’t pressuring me. They told me I didn’t have to help them, but I want to. Everyone has suffered enough for what Grace did. I don’t know why it was so bad that she fell in love with a vampire, but great-great grandpa got what he wanted, didn’t he? She married the witch he wanted her to and the vampire died, never able to take her back.” Sean stated.

“How did you know that?” He asked.

“My mate is the descendant of the Alpha at the time. He wrote everything he saw every day in his journals. He covered everything from before the curse ever took effect up until the curse stopped him from writing about it. Plus, we know Lila. She told us what she could and several vampires worked hard to give us their knowledge, working through the pain. Maeve, the queen of the fae, gave us what she could as well.” I explained.

“Why is everyone so hot to get rid of the curse now? It’s been around for decades and they never worked together before.” Fenton scoffed.

I felt something tap me and looked down. The cat was trying to crawl on me. I moved my hands from my lap and he crawled up, staring into my eyes the whole time. I got a little nervous. He started rubbing his face on mine, like Gray did when he was scenting me.

Carefully, I scratched behind his ear. Fenton watched me and sighed. I looked over at Sean, who was looking at me in disbelief.

“He’s never done that to anyone.” Sean whispered.

“The Old Man likes you. Look, I was just a baby when the curse was laid. It doesn’t affect our family, that’s why so many have moved away. All I know is that Fenton Sr. wasn’t able to be talked out of it. My father tried. In the end, he let his sister and brothers be taken away by the other witch family and cut off contact with them, so he wouldn’t give away anything. Especially after Aunt Grace’s boyfriend died. It was his greatest regret.” Fenton told us.

“So you don’t know anything?” Sean asked.

“He just told us, Fenton didn’t sacrifice any of his children for the curse. That was something we didn’t know before. Everyone just assumed he did because they disappeared. That has to tell us something. We can tell Lila. She can take it into account when she goes over your father’s notes.” I smiled.

“You thought he would really do that after everything he did to save Aunt Grace from the vampire’s thrall?” Fenton snorted.

“She wasn’t in his thrall. She was his Solus Amor. His only love.” I insisted. “Grigori would have never hurt Grace. He loved her with all his heart. When she was taken from him, he tried to follow, but started feeling drained the further he got from the territory. He had to come back. When he heard about the curse and how he was one of the focuses of it, he let himself be taken by the sun. He didn’t want to live without her.”

“That’s not what I heard. I heard he was fighting with his supports who wanted him to give up the territory and they staked him out for the sun, then they ran to try and escape the curse.” Fenton said.

“The letter he sent to the council said that he was sacrificing himself. So did the one he sent Maeve. It doesn’t make sense, I know they disappeared after he did, but we all thought that was just the curse.” I murmured.

“There’s a lot you don’t know. That split tree on the property, the one where the bloody tooth fungus grows, that’s where he died. Why would he go to the property of someone who took his only love from him? Answer, he didn’t they staked him to the earth there to punish him for dallying with a human and causing the curse. They thought the curse would be broken if he gave up the territory.” Fenton stated firmly.

“Even William’s journals say that he was meeting the sun himself. He went to that tree because that was where he first saw Grace and fell in love with her. There was more meaning behind that tree than you or your family realized.” I replied.

He nodded. “So it seems. I don’t have any information for you. If my father knew how to break the curse, he didn’t tell me. If I knew, I don’t know that I would help. Whatever reason my grandfather had for setting the curse, it had to be a good one. You don’t curse so many people without a good reason. It can’t just be because Aunt Grace loved a vampire.”

“Please. Uncle Fenton. My girlfriend is fae. I want her to be able to go out in the world for more than eight hours at a time. I want to take her to see the world.” Sean insisted.

“Break it off with her. All the other supernaturals in the area only want you to free them from the curse. Move away from here, find a nice human like your father did. Travel the world like your aunt is doing. Forget the hot fae girl. She’s probably only using you.” Fenton scoffed.

Sean stood angrily. “Rosario would never use me! My friends would never use me. They don’t do selfish things like that. I’m not giving up. I refuse to let this curse affect another generation. Come on, Echo. Let’s get you home to Victor.”

I put the cat back on the coffee table. He moved his paw in a petting motion. I gave his ears another scratch before standing.

“I’m sorry to have bothered you, Mr. Aimes. Thank you for all your help. I hope you have a good evening.” I said and followed Sean out of the apartment.

He paced as we waited for the elevator, growling and grumbling. I stood by silently. He was dealing with a lot.

When the elevator arrived, he pulled me on and pushed the button for the ground floor. I gripped the railing inside the elevator while Sean paced more. I’d never seen him like that.

He plastered a fake smile on his face as we walked past the reception desk and he waved to the women there. It was hard to keep up with his long strides. I was practically running to the car.

In the car, he turned to me.

“Tell Victor, Rosario and I are moving in. We’ll sleep on the couches if we have to. I’m done playing around with this curse. We’re on the case twenty-four/seven.” Sean growled.

“I can ask him. We don’t have too many rooms. You may have to room together.” I winked.

That seemed to shake him out of his anger. Sean blushed deeply as a smile tugged at his lips. He started laughing.

“Did Rosario put you up to that one? He’s been... persistent.” Sean chuckled.

“Gray and Victor were like that. They taught me everything. They were very patient with me.” I told him. “Why aren’t you sleeping with Rosario?”

“It’s never the right time or place. When I wanted it, he said it was the wrong place, when he wanted it, I said it was the wrong time. It was just never quite right. I really mean it about moving in with you.” He said.

“Let’s talk to Victor about it. You can’t touch me in front of him. The way the curse is affecting him is making him more possessive. Okay?” I asked.

“Alright. I can do that. I want to do what I can, and I think that getting the vampires working with us will be the best possible choice.” Sean smiled. “They just have to listen to us.”

“They’ll be more likely than other adults. Even though we’re all teens, Talia is always open to hear what we have to say. Finn will do whatever she says.” I said.

We headed to the house. The tension from the meeting with his great-uncle seemed to be dissipating. Sean relaxed more, the farther we got from the senior home.

By the time we pulled into the drive and I told him the code to open the gate, we were both in a better state of mind. We needed it for the next step in the evening. I had to get Victor to agree to have four new people move in with us.

Coming Together

## Chapter 123 - The Vampire's Servant

Sean and I headed to Victor’s office. I was eager to talk to him about what happened at lunch. The lead with Sean’s great-uncle hadn’t been the best, but we’d gotten a little bit more. It was something.

I opened the door to Victor's office and smiled at him. Victor got up from his chair and pulled me into his arms. He sniffed and held me away from him.

"You smell like another man." Victor growled.

"I had to hold on to Sean, because the elevator scared me, Victor." I answered softly.

He held me to him tightly. "I'm sorry, princess. Are you alright?"

"Yes. It was shaky at the top and I got scared. I wouldn't have touched Sean like that without a reason. I don't like when you're mad at me, Victor." I whispered.

"It was the curse. I trust you. I can smell Sean and a relative of his on you. That's two men and my brain is having trouble." He replied, kissing the top of my head.

"We went to see his great-uncle, remember?" I asked.

"Right. Come in and tell us what you found." Victor said, pulling me into the room.

Sean followed us and was seated on the couch next to Finn. Talia sat in one of the chairs. Victor pulled me into his lap.

"My great-uncle didn't have a lot for us. He was only a baby. He said that his grandfather didn't sacrifice any of his children, they were sent with Grace to her new home. He also thought the Master was killed by his supports. He was adamant that they had staked him out for the sun, not that he had sacrificed himself. We told him everything pointed to him killing himself, but we may want to look into that a little." Sean said.

"Victor, can Sean and Rosario move in with us too? They want to help with the curse and they think they'll be better able to from here. They aren't a threat to your territory, because they aren't vampires, and they aren't a threat to our relationship, because they're gay. Please, Victor?" I asked.

He looked over at Sean, then to Talia. "The house is getting pretty full, Harmony called and told me that your uncles will be coming with them when they move in here. I don't think there's room."

"Finn and I can sleep with you. You have a big bed. That will free up two more rooms. Maybe this is what we need to break the curse. Everyone living together under one roof. There have been worse ideas proposed. Sean, will your parents be okay with this?" Talia asked.

"I'm eighteen. I'll tell them the truth, I will be here until the curse is broken. I want to help fix this. I need to be a part of it. My ancestor did this, I need to help." Sean replied.

Victor sighed. "I suppose we can do it like that. It's not like I'll be having you in my bed until this curse is done, I might as well let Finn and Talia sleep there."

“I’ll go tell my parents as soon as we’re done here. Echo needs to tell you all what happened at lunch.” Sean said excitedly.

“What happened at lunch, my love?” Victor asked.

“I held hands with my sister and brother. There was a breeze that swept through the place and suddenly, the mate bond grew stronger for the wolves and two seventeen-year-old wolves found out they were mates!” I told them.

Victor looked shocked. A huge grin spread across his face and he squeezed me tightly. I saw that Talia and Finn were looking at each other with a similar expression.

“Did it seem to go any further?” Talia asked.

“No. It only seemed to affect the cafeteria. We don’t know how long it will last, either. Cam is watching the two wolves in question.” Sean answered.

“This could help hold off the progression of the curse for Victor.” Talia whispered. “It could give us more time!”

“Well done, princess! We’ll get them moved in as soon as possible and see what it does.” Victor kissed my cheek. “You have amazed me, yet again. My sweet little princess.”

I turned and kissed Victor deeply. He responded with hunger. My body craved him so badly. I loved when he was proud of me.

We pulled away. Victor caressed my cheek and I rubbed my face against his hand. I could see in his eyes that it was entirely him. I hoped this worked, because I wanted Victor back.

“You have a lot of work to do, princess. You’ll need to get the house ready for three more werewolves and arrange rooms for everyone.” Victor said.

“I can do it, Victor. I need to go start cooking dinner. I can work on my plan while I cook. Come on, Sean, I’ll walk you out.”

I got off of Victor’s lap and guided Sean out to the entryway. He held my hand and smiled. I could see how excited he was for a real adventure.

“I’m going to tell my parents and start packing. I don’t know if they’ll help me move, but I’m hopeful that I’ll be able to do this smoothly. I don’t want my parents thinking that I’m mad at them or anything.” Sean told me.

“They won’t. You’ll explain and they’ll understand. I just know it. Trust me, Sean. Everything will be fine, plus, now that I’ve been to your house, I can travel there any time. If you need help moving, I can bring you and your things over.” I winked.



“That’s a really useful power.” He smiled. “I’ll text you and let you know how it goes.”

Sean left with a wave and I went into the kitchen to begin cooking. Once I got everything started, I pulled out a notepad from a drawer and started planning where I could put everyone. No matter how I worked it, I had one more person than I had bedrooms.

I considered the guest cottage, but I didn’t know who I would put in there and I was pretty sure all four bedrooms were taken by the werewolves who guarded the property. All I could think of was rooming someone with someone else. Val would be upset if I had Cam and Harmony together, and Cam wouldn’t like Val and Harmony in the same room.

Putting Harmony in my room would work... then I had an idea that made me grin. I had joked about it earlier with Sean, but it would work and still give everyone their space. I put Rosario and Sean in room six. The one I usually reserved for Marius.

Quickly, I sent him a text letting him know I needed his room for guests. He told me it was fine as long as they weren’t werewolves. I assured him they weren’t and solidified my plan.

Trent called as I was pulling everything out of the oven and letting it rest. I turned the stovetop burners to low and gave the pots a quick stir before answering.

“Hello?”

“Echo, Victor told me I should call you, since you’re in charge of the house. I talked to my guys in the guest house and they’re going to double up in rooms, since two work the dayshift and two work the night. I’m sending over a couple of omegas to help with meals and housekeeping. With a full house, you need support.” Trent said, getting straight to business.

“Are you sure? Do they really want to work for a vampire?” I asked.

“They want to help their pack. Omegas always want to do what will help their pack the most, we take care of them in some ways, they take care of us in others. I have carefully selected two omegas who are okay with the idea of working for vampires.” He told me.

“When should I expect them?”

“Everyone is packing up to move in after school tomorrow. I’m having them come first thing in the morning so you have time to go over everything and they can get started on preparing the rooms.” Trent answered.

“Thank you, Alpha Padua. I appreciate you sending someone to help. I’ll make sure everything is ready for them.” I said.

“No problem. If this helps speed up the process of getting rid of the curse and saves Victor, I’m prepared to give anything I can.” He replied seriously.

We said our goodbyes and I texted Rosario that he was cleared to move in. As I was serving dinner, Sean texted to let me know that his parents were worried, but otherwise knew he was an adult and could do as he pleased. He said he would move in tomorrow when I told him everyone else was. Wednesday was going to be a fairly busy day.

At dinner, I let everyone know about the changes that would be happening tomorrow. Victor okayed me giving the omegas his debit card to use for the household. Dillon said that he would help oversee everything. Jean-Claude suggested that I not train tomorrow so I could show the omegas around and get them settled. I accepted the suggestion.

I waited up for Gray, so I could tell him everything. He was thrilled that it had all worked out, but was dismayed that Finn's hunch hadn't paid off. I assured him that we were going to work it out. Someone there had to know, Finn had always said that it was someone at the home, not necessarily Fenton himself.

Bedtime was lonely. I stared at my ceiling and tried to keep the positive attitude going, but I just couldn't. I tried to stay quiet as I cried. I didn't know what was about to happen. I didn't know if we were really going to save Victor. I didn't know if any of this was actually going to change anything.

Victor and Gray were probably trying not to come in my room, to give me space and not upset the other. I wished one of them would, though. I felt more alone than I had in weeks. Eventually, I fell into a fitful sleep.

-

The next morning, I could barely open my eyes. It was like they were sealed shut. I got into the shower and scrubbed, trying to get myself moving and thinking. I had a lot to do today. I dressed for school and headed downstairs.

When I arrived in the entryway, Victor was opening the front door. He waved in two pretty young women. One was about my height, the other was taller. The taller one had dark skin and eyes. Her hair was cut very short and seemed to be just a shadow on her head. The shorter one was pale and blonde. She reminded me of Felix with the paleness of her skin.

"Echo, the omegas have arrived." Victor said, turning to me.

I smiled at them and they smiled and bowed a little to me. Victor just turned and walked away. I watched him leave, but shook loose the sad feeling.

"I'm Echo Nightshade. That was Victor, the Master of the territory." I explained.

"I'm Wendell, this is my friend Lisa." The blonde one said.

“Thank you very much for coming to help us.” I said. “Let me show you to the guest cottage. You can put your things there and I can give you a tour of the house, followed by what I need done today.”

“What should we call you?” Lisa asked.

“Normally, Echo. If we tell you there’s something important going on, Mistress Nightshade. Always address Victor as Master Nightshade, just like you always call Trent ‘Alpha’.” I instructed them as we walked through the house and out the backdoor toward the cottage.

Brandon and Travis were up having breakfast before they took over the watch. They showed the girls up to their rooms. While the girls were putting their bags up, Brandon assured me that all four of them would act like perfect gentlemen, as their Alpha commanded.

I led the girls back to the house and showed them around the main floor. I gave them Victor’s card so they could make purchases. When we got to Victor’s, closed, office door I stopped them.

“This is Victor’s office. I’m the only one who cleans this room. Just let the door stand open during the day so Bobby can vacuum.”

“Who’s Bobby?” Wendell asked.

“One of my vacuum robots. I have two, Bobby for the main floor and Billy for upstairs.” I explained.

“Okay, that’s cute.” Lisa snickered.

I took them upstairs and explained that no one was allowed to clean Victor’s bedroom except for me. I went over what I needed them to do to get each of the bedrooms ready for our guests. I took them back to the kitchen and showed them where the recipes for blood foods were.

They helped me get breakfast ready when everyone came in from training. I told them to have breakfast with us so they would know who most of us were. They were happy to join.

“This should be easy enough to take care of. We’re used to working in the pack house where there are easily a hundred wolves living.” Lisa said. “Anything else we should know?”

“Stay out of the basement. They’re working on putting in cells that even vampires can’t break out of and they’re on a timeline. Let me, Finn, or Talia know immediately if Victor threatens you. You should have a link with Cam, Harmony, and Gray. Let Gray know if you have a problem with Victor and no vampire is around or you can’t get away from him. If you focus on me hard enough, you should be able to get a message to me.” I warned.

“Is it likely that he might attack us?” Wendell asked.

“I doubt it. Just stay out of the areas I told you to stay out of. If he perceives you as a threat, I may not be able to save you before he does something regrettable.” I replied.

They looked at each other and got that distant look, like they were mindlinking. I hoped they weren't rethinking their decision to come help us. They nodded.

“We'll treat him like we would our Alpha and try to stay out of his way.” Wendell told me.

I smiled brightly and we finished the meal. They really knew their way around the kitchen and I think it was the fastest I'd put out a meal since Bellamy left. We had everything settled in the dining room before anyone made it in to help set the table.

While we ate, I introduced them and they answered everyone's questions. It was very comfortable. Like the calm before the storm. This afternoon, I knew the house would be lively.

After breakfast, I went and got my backpack. I was slipping my shoes on in the entry when Victor came in. I looked up at him and smiled.

“Are you feeling better this morning? I wanted to come to you, but....” He sighed. “I was worried I was part of the reason you were upset.”

Gray came in and stood a good distance away. He watched us intently. I'd seen him covered in bruises this morning again. I wanted to go to him, but Victor was there.

“I'm better, Victor. I need to get out to the bus stop.” I told him.

He held his hand out and I took it. Victor pulled me to him and kissed me deeply. I nearly melted against him, but remembered that Gray was right there and pulled away.

“I'll see you later. Okay, Victor?” I whispered.

“You're mine. I better not smell any other males on you when I wake.” He warned.

“Of course not, Victor. I love you. Sleep well today.” I replied.

He let me go and I left the house. Gray left a couple minutes later and we went to his truck. He was careful not to touch me until we were standing at the bus stop a few moments later.

Gray grabbed me and kissed me like Victor had. I wrapped my arms around his neck and pulled him to me tighter.

“I'm sorry I didn't come to you last night, angel. I love you so much. It hurt to feel you crying and know I couldn't go hold you. I swear, I'll never let you cry alone again once this curse is broken.” He murmured.

“I know. I love you, too. Just try to stay alive until we can break the curse. I don’t want Victor to kill you. I need both of you alive and healthy.”

I heard the bus coming and pulled away. Gray caressed my face before letting me go and heading to his truck. I felt cold, colder than I’d ever felt before. Turning, I got on the bus and sat in my seat, alone.

Rosario wasn’t on the bus. I didn’t want to deal with people asking after me. I wondered where he was, but I’d find out later. I stared out the window and let my mind go blank. It was a nice change from the noisy mess it had become.

Moving In

## Chapter 124 - The Vampire's Servant

[Sean]

I rode the bus home. Rosario didn’t show up at school. I figured he was just busy packing.

Echo was distant today. It got worse when we found out the couple from yesterday woke up not feeling the mate bond. She looked like she was trying not to cry.

When I got off the bus, I walked down the street to my house. It was a little surreal that I wasn’t going to make this walk again. But, I was excited for a change in my life.

Moving in with Echo and Gray was going to put me at the heart of the curse situation. I wanted to help as much as possible and this was going to be what ensured I was always there to get the most up to date information. I opened the front door and my mom was right there.

She grabbed me and pulled me into a tight hug. I hugged her back. Mom had been acting like she would never see me again, but I promised her I would come for dinner and game night on Saturdays and stay overnight to spend time with her on Sunday mornings.

“I can’t believe this is the last time you’ll come home from school. My baby is moving away. I thought we had three more months before this happened.” She sniffled.

“Mom, I’m going to be in town and I’ll move back as soon as we figure out this curse. I promise, you’re not losing me forever.” I murmured.

“I know, I know. I just wasn’t ready for you to be all grown up.”

“I have to finish packing. Are you and dad really okay with driving me over? I can see if someone else can take me.”

“Your father is getting off work early today just so we can take you. He wants to know where you’re going to be living. So do I.” Mom insisted.

“Let me go, then. You know dad doesn’t like to leave late for things. I still have work to do.” I told her.

Mom let me go and I went to my room. I’d packed a suitcase with clothes last night. Today, I wanted to get some books and other things. I worked on getting a box packed with some of my books and other items. I pulled the pack of condoms out of the nightstand.

I didn’t want mom to go through my room all weepy and nostalgic and find them, so I put them into my bag. Maybe I could sneak into Rosario’s room one night and actually make use of them. I smiled at the idea of finally being intimate with my boyfriend.

There was a knock at my door and I called out for them to come in. My dad opened the door and closed it quickly behind him. He approached me, looking determined.

“I want to make sure you absolutely know what you’re doing. You aren’t feeding vampires. You’re just there to help with the curse. Don’t let them bite you.” Dad ordered.

“Dad, the vampires aren’t interested in my blood. I’m sure they have other ways of getting what they need that doesn’t involve drinking blood from a teenager. In both times I’ve been there, they haven’t once approached me about it. Please trust that I know what I’m doing.” I said.

“It’s not that I don’t trust you, Sean. I don’t trust them.” He sighed.

“You trusted Echo. She wouldn’t have done this just so vampires can drink my blood, dad. Rosario will be there, Gray, Cam, Val, and Harmony will be there. They have a lot of choices before they even consider a witch with no affinity.” I chuckled.

He nodded and picked up the box I had just finished. I grabbed my suitcase and we headed out to the car. We loaded the stuff into the trunk and I got in the backseat. Dad was driving and mom got carsick in the back, so I always sat there.

As we drove, dad gave a lecture on the rules with different supernaturals. He made sure I understood as much as possible. I wanted to roll my eyes at him, but this was what dads were supposed to do. They were supposed to worry over you and make sure you understood the world.

We turned into the driveway and he hit the intercom button at the gate. A voice I didn’t recognize answered. They directed us where to park and opened the gate.

When we pulled up, I saw Val and Cam’s cars along with two cars I didn’t recognize. Gray’s truck pulled up behind us as I was opening the trunk. He jogged over.

“Hey! Let me help.” Gray smiled.

I felt a little guilty that my heart did a flip. I loved Rosario, but Gray was my crush for so long, that I sometimes had trouble. Especially when he smiled. Maybe this would be what I needed to get him off my mind.

Gray picked up the box and my suitcase, leaving nothing for us to carry in. He nodded to my dad and mom.

“I’m Gray Padua. I live here. It’s nice to meet you.”

“Oh, you’re one of Echo’s husbands.” My mom said.

“Yes, ma’am. Thank you for letting us borrow Sean. He’s really smart, and we could use as many smart people working on this problem as possible.” Gray smiled. “Follow me.”

He led us into the house. We were met by Echo and a short, pale girl. Echo nodded to us.

“Sean is in room six.” She told the girl.

The pale girl took my things from Gray and headed up the stairs. She lifted them as if they weighed nothing.

Echo came over and held out her hand to my dad. He accepted it. She did the same with my mom.

“I need to know what adults are in the house.” Dad said.

I sighed.

“Well, there’s Dillon and Jean-Claude. They’re helping get people settled. My uncles are here, they’re unpacking. Finn and Victor are still asleep. And... Talia... I think she’s in the library. Talia!” Echo called.

A short while later, the small vampire came into the entry way. She had a congenial smile on her face and greeted my parents.

“This is Talia. She’s Victor’s sire and the oldest person in the house.” Echo grinned.

“Talia the Traveler.” My dad said quietly.

“I see my reputation precedes me.” Talia chuckled. “Do not worry about your son, I will make sure that he is safe here. All the children are under my care and I do not fail those in my care.”

“Th-thank you. If you say he’s safe, I’ll believe you.”

“Good. You should get going. We’re trying to get everyone settled in before the boys wake for the night. Sean will see you some other time. I’m sure he’s eager to get unpacked.” She smiled.

My parents hugged me and my mom gave me a kiss on the cheek. I said goodbye to them and waved them off as they drove away. I returned to the entry way. Talia was still there.

“Did you use mind control on them?” I asked.

“No. When people know who I am, they tend to just do what I say.” Talia shrugged.

She wandered away and I shook my head. Echo seemed amused. Gray crossed to her quickly.

“Have you showered yet?” He asked.

“No, I was waiting on Rosario. He said he’d be here soon. I should have plenty of time before Victor wakes up.” She responded.

Gray swept her into his arms and started kissing her like his life depended on it. I tried to look anywhere but at them. The intercom rang, breaking them apart. Echo sighed and went to answer it.

“Who is it?” Echo asked sweetly.

“Rosario.” Came the strained answer.

Echo looked alarmed and opened the gate, followed by the door. I was right behind her. I didn’t like how he sounded.

Rosario pulled up in a brand new car. It still had the dealer’s ad plates on it. He wasn’t in his glamour. When he got out, I could see blood on the leather seat.

I pushed past Echo and ran to him. He leaned against the car, looking completely fine. I couldn’t even see where the blood was coming from.

“You’re pretending to not be wearing glamour. Drop it now. Let me see.” I insisted.

“You’re so cute, babe. I’m fine.” He assured me.

“There’s blood on your seat.” Gray said, sniffing. “I smell a lot of blood.”

“Just let me go rest in my room. I’ll be fine.” Rosario told us.

As he tried to move from the car, he lurched a little and started to fall. I caught him and, even though his shirt looked dry, he felt like he was covered in warm, somewhat sticky, liquid. I pulled my hand away and it was covered in blood.



“Shit.” Gray said and moved to support Rosario.

Rosario grunted and groaned with pain. I didn’t know what to do. I was panicking.

“Can you lift him, Gray?” Echo asked.

Rosario shook his head. “It’s mostly on my back and legs.” He whispered.

“Let’s get him up to his room. I want him cleaned up. I’ll try healing him.” Echo said.

Gray and I helped Rosario up the stairs and Echo led us to a room with a number six on it. I barely had time to register everything, Rosario’s glamour faded as we crossed the threshold.

The back of his pants and shirt were torn up and I could see where some of the tears wrapped around his waist. He had a split lip and his face was a little swollen. Echo gasped.

“There are towels in the bathroom, Gray. Go get two, please. Sean, help me get his clothes off, I don’t want him to have to shower twice.” Echo ordered.

My hands were shaking so bad I couldn’t manage his zipper and button. Echo started tearing the fabric on his shirt and then moved to the waist of his pants. I looked at her helplessly.

She grabbed where the material was the thinnest and started tearing it away. Gray came out with the towels and laid one on the bed. He helped us move the, now, naked Rosario and had him lay on his stomach.

I covered his butt with the other towel when Talia charged into the room. Her eyes were wide as she took in the sight of Rosario on the bed. I stepped in front of him. He’d told me how vampires reacted to fae blood.

“Who the hell did this?!” She growled. “Who hurt this child?”

I turned to look at Rosario, but he moved so I couldn’t see his face. I knew exactly who did this and it made my blood boil.

“His father.” I hissed.

Echo looked at me, then back to Rosario. She clenched her fists.

“Never again. He will never hurt you again, Rosario. This is a safe home. You’re safe here.” She promised. “Talia. Go get my sister and brother. I need them to help me.”

“Help with what?” I asked.

“We’re going to heal this. I’m not going to let Rosario live in pain while this heals at a normal pace. I can do it. I just need more power.” Echo said.

Talia seemed to disappear. Gray came up beside me with a damp wash cloth. He handed it to me and nodded toward Rosario.

I sat on the bed and ran the cloth over the unbroken skin, taking away some of the blood and revealing his rich brown skin. I was careful and diligent. I softly murmured my promises of love to him while I cleaned his skin.

Before long, Val and Harmony came in the room trailed by a man I didn't know. He looked a little like them, so I assumed it was their uncle. Harmony covered her mouth in shock. Val looked like he was going to be sick.

Echo took off her shirt and approached the bed. "Sean, I need you to go to the other side of the bed and hold Rosario's hand. It will make him feel better while I do this."

"Echo." I whispered.

"I know. I'll try to make sure I don't hurt him. Go on." She said.

I got up and went to the other side of the bed. I laid down next to Rosario, on my stomach, and held his hand while looking into his eyes. He looked cold and distant for a moment. Then, his expression softened as he looked into my eyes.

"Valor, Harmony, I want you each to put a hand on my shoulder. I'm going to see if I can use some of your energy to help me heal him." Echo explained.

I didn't watch what happened next. I only watched Rosario's eyes. I watched as the cut on his lip healed and the swollen look in his face went away. A relieved look crossed his face. I was happy that the pain was going away.

"What is going on here?" Victor growled from the doorway.

Rosario needed me, I couldn't look up and see what was happening. Instead I just listened while someone grappled with him and the door closed. I hoped whoever got him out was alright.

"That's the last one." Echo sighed.

"Thank the goddess." Their uncle said. "That was amazing. Healing magic is rare and you did it like a pro, Echo."

"I've healed people before. Now, I need to go shower, change, and try to calm my husband down. Thank you both for helping. Excuse me." She said.

"We'll leave you two alone." Harmony told me. "We'll let you know when it's time for dinner. Come on, Val. Come on, Uncle Preston."

They muttered their goodbyes and left the room. I reached out and caressed Rosario's cheek. He smiled slightly.

"You told me he doesn't hurt you anymore. Why did this happen?" I asked.

"He lost his temper when I told him I was moving in here. Mom only just got him to stop and told me to run. I don't have anything except what I packed in the car last night." Rosario answered.

"You're never going back to him. I never want him around you again." I growled.

"It's not that easy, Sean. I really wish it was. My father is the king. Even after this is all over, he will be the king until he dies or retires. At least a hundred more years."

"We'll stay here with Victor and Echo, then. The vampires will protect you. I know I'm basically useless here. I can't save you. I can't protect you. I can't even heal you." I said in a dejected tone.

"Sean, baby, I'm not just any fae. I'm the prince. I'm going to take over for my mom when she retires. I can't just hide away. You gave me the strength to endure him. I would have just given in at the punch to the face before I had you. He didn't start whipping me until I turned to leave after telling him I'd do what was best for our people, no matter what he wanted." Rosario explained. "I knew, if I had you, I could be strong. I came here hoping to find you, and I did. You did save me. I'm a stronger leader because of you."

"I love you." I whispered.

"I love you, too. I just hope you still love me with all these new scars." He sighed.

I raised up on my elbows and looked over his back. It was as perfect and smooth as ever. I reached out and ran my fingers over his skin.

"You don't have any scars." I told him.

He looked at me in surprise. A grin crossed his face and I knew he was relieved to hear that. I was glad I didn't have to see a reminder of what his father had done to him. I didn't have to see the shiny scars where the terrible open wounds had been.

Gently, I leaned in and kissed him. He rolled onto his back and pulled me close. My hand trailed down to where the towel haphazardly covered him.

Suddenly, there was a scream from the hallway. It was followed by a man bellowing.

"ECHO!!!"

We pulled away and I dashed out into the hall to find complete chaos. I didn't see Echo and I worried for where she could be. What the hell happened?

The Right Time and Place

## Chapter 125 - The Vampire's Servant

Everyone was running around. Victor was down the hall, being held back by Finn and Talia. Rosario came out with the towel wrapped around his waist.

“What’s going on?” He asked.

“No idea.” I replied and grabbed the first person going past.

It was the small, pale, girl. She looked a little shaken.

“What happened?”

“Master Nightshade was talking with Echo in the hallway. He got real close and hissed, showing off his fangs. She screamed and disappeared. Everyone’s trying to find her.” She explained.

“Thank you.” I told her and let her go. “Rosario, go back in the room. I’ll get your bag or bags from the car. I need to figure out where my room is.”

“This is your room.” The girl said.

“Then, where’s his room?” I asked.

“This is his room as well. There wasn’t enough room for everyone to sleep single. Echo felt you two would do best rooming together.” She smiled.

Rosario chuckled. “Well, I guess I’ll just wait here in our room. Babe.”

I blushed and hurried to the stairs. I couldn’t believe Echo actually put us in the same room. I was going to have a serious talk with her later.

Making my way to the car, I found a suitcase in the back. I pulled it out. A tall, black woman was coming out to the car. I looked at her curiously.

“I’m going to clean it up. Echo asked me to before she disappeared, and she doesn’t need another person trying to find her. She’ll come home on her own. She’s a grown ass woman and they’re all acting like she’s a child.” She scoffed.

“I’m Sean.” I said.

“Lisa. You let me and Wendell know if there’s anything you need. We’re here to work in the house.”

“Like servants?” I asked.

“Kind of. In werewolf culture, people are put into groups based on their power level. Me and Wen are omegas. We’re smaller and less powerful than common wolves. They and the higher ranked wolves, the Alpha, Beta, and Gamma, protect the pack with their muscles and claws. Wen and I take care of our pack in other ways. We work in the pack house, the pack hospital, the schools. Omegas aren’t just cleaning staff, we’re doctors, nurses, teachers, and other essential workers. Wen is just best in the kitchen and I’m good at organizing. It’s what a house like this needs, someone to take care of all the little things so it works smoothly while everyone is busy with the big stuff.” She explained.

“Wow. That’s really cool. I’ll let you get to it, then. Let me know if there’s ever some way I can help. I was raised doing chores around the house, so it would be weird not to do anything.” I told her.

“You can be in charge of taking out the trash every day. Werewolves, no matter their rank, have sensitive senses of smell. It’s a terrible job when you can smell everything rotting in there.” Lisa replied with a smile.

I nodded and turned back to the house. I needed to get Rosario dressed and put my things away. Everyone was still rushing around the house. Harmony was pacing in the hallway with her phone.

“She doesn’t have her phone with her, Sean. Do you have any idea where she could’ve gone?” She asked.

“Sorry. Just let her alone. Echo will come back on her own. She just needs to have some time. It wasn’t safe for her to be here, she’ll come home when she thinks it is.” I said.

“You don’t understand, Sean. Echo’s new to the whole world. She trusts too easily and she doesn’t realize the kind of bad people there are.” Harmony insisted.

“I think you’re wrong there. She got kidnapped a few weeks ago. Echo knows the kinds of bad people that are out there. She just chooses to seem innocent to all of you. And you keep pushing it on her. Let her show you how grown up she is. You can’t treat her like a baby forever.” I advised, stepping around her and heading to my room.

“Maybe... but I love her too much to give up on finding her. What if she’s hurt?” She asked.

“I’m sure Echo is fine, Harmony. She’s not stupid. She wouldn’t stay away if she was hurt. She would go somewhere for help.”

“The pack lands. They have a hospital! I’ll call Trent! Thanks, Sean!” Harmony smiled and bounced off.

I shook my head. This place was even crazier than I originally thought. I opened the door to my room... our room.

Rosario was laying on the bed in a seductive pose with the towel draped over his lap. The window was open and weak sunlight was streaming into the room, making his rich brown skin glow. I turned to close the door quickly and took a breath. I didn’t know how to react, though my body was getting some ideas.

“Why don’t you bring that over to the bed, baby. There’s plenty of room for it. Plenty of room for you, too.” He purred.

“W-we should go help find Echo.” I stuttered.

“Mmm. The flowers are singing. She’s out in the garden with them. Now that we’ve found her, come lay down with me for a while.” Rosario said.

I kept myself turned toward the door and debated heading back out into the hallway or down into the garden. Hiding seemed like a good idea. I heard movement behind me.

Rosario’s hands landed on my shoulders. He started kissing my ear, then my neck. I groaned at the feeling of his lips on my skin.

“Why are you being so shy? I know you’re not like this normally. You’re my bold human boy. The one who begged for me on the floor of the archery range, the one who touches me under the tables and desks at school, the one who sent me all those dirty pictures.” He chuckled.

“You asked for those.” I murmured.

“Only after you asked me to send you some.” Came the reply. “Goddess, it was so hot taking those pictures and knowing you were going to see them. Thinking about what you would do when you did. Did you touch yourself, Sean?”

I nodded. I had. His body was glorious and I’d imagined licking every inch of it while I’d touched myself.

“Let me make love to you. We can do it now to take the pressure off us tonight. Everyone’s busy, no one will interrupt. Lock the door, Sean. Show me you actually do want me as much as I want you.” Rosario whispered huskily in my ear.

With a slightly shaking hand, I locked the door. He ground himself into my backside. I couldn’t believe what I was about to do.

Turning in his arms, I looked up into his eyes. There was a heat in them that was accompanied by a lot of movement. It was like a howling wind was blowing through the canopy in his eyes.

Rosario kissed me deeply. He pressed me against the door as his hand traveled down my body, settling on the waist of my pants. I moaned.

“Is that a yes?” He asked, breathing heavily.

“Yes. Please, Rosario.” I groaned.

He pulled back and I whipped my shirt over my head as he fought with the button on my jeans. I swatted his hands away and unbuttoned them, then lowered my zipper. Rosario grabbed the waist of my jeans and my underwear and pulled them down.

While he was on his knees, he licked and kissed my length. The pleasurable feeling of it made me work faster to get my jeans entirely off. I needed him more than I had ever needed anything in my life.

I looked down and bit my tongue between my front teeth, then I took off my glasses. Rosario’s mouth closed over me and he started sucking vigorously. I tossed my glasses onto the nearby dresser and moved my hands to his hair.

Leaning my head back, I breathed heavily as he kept going. He pulled his mouth off me with a pop. I groaned.

“Let’s go to the bed, babe.” Rosario purred.

He stood and let me move from the door. He dug around in his bag before turning to follow me. I was standing by the bed watching every one of his muscles as he moved.

“Lay down.” He told me as he got close. “Have you been touching yourself the way I told you too?”

I blushed a little and nodded.

“Use your words, Sean.” He growled.

“Yes. I have.”

“Mmm. Good. That will make this a little easier on you.” Rosario smirked.

I climbed onto the bed and, before I could crawl to the center of the bed, he gripped my hips and ground into me. I could feel his tip pressing into me. A shiver went through me. I was so ready. I started rocking back, only to have Rosario pull away.

“No. When I make love to you, I’m going to be looking into those gorgeous eyes. Lay down and move your feet up as close to your hips as possible.” He ordered.

With a sigh, I did as he said. Rosario moved near me and started propping my head and back up with pillows. He was careful with me, like I was a glass doll or something.

When he moved back between my legs, I became excited. I was finally going to have sex with my boyfriend. I watched as he stroked himself while looking over my body.

“Pictures weren’t enough to do justice to you, Sean. I love every inch of you.” Rosario whispered as he reached for something on the bed.

He picked up a bottle of lube and winked at me as he squeezed some out onto his fingers and reached down. I bit my lips together as he rubbed it in and around me down there. I moaned as his fingers slipped inside me.

“Relax, babe. I want this to feel good for you. I’m gonna add just a little more lube, then we’ll start. Goddess, I can’t wait to be inside of you.” Rosario groaned.

His fingers stroked in me, rubbing my prostate and sending the most delicious bolts of electric pleasure through me. He added more lube while he was doing that, making his fingers slide into me with ease. I needed more. I needed Rosario.

“Please.” I begged. “Do it now.”

With a grin, he pulled his fingers out and added some lube to his large member. I shivered with anticipation. I would finally feel him inside of me. Something I’d dreamed of for over a week.

As he pushed in, Rosario bent forward until our foreheads were pressed together and he was fully inside me. I moaned with pleasure. He kissed me and started moving, pulling back and sliding forward.

I groaned and sighed against his lips. My legs went up, wrapping around his waist, as my hands found their way to his leaf green hair. The palms of my hands brushed over the pointed tips of his ears and he let out a sound that I loved.

Rosario pulled back from our kiss and gazed into my eyes as he moved inside me. I rubbed the tips of my fingers along his ears and the heat in his eyes intensified.

“You have no idea what you’re doing to me, baby. Don’t you know elf ears are sensitive?” He chuckled.

“I figured they might be. I love you. I love being with you. I want to make you feel as amazing as you make me feel.” I murmured.



“Then just keep loving me. That’s all I need to feel amazing with you. All of your love makes me feel a thousand feet tall. I’m invincible when armored with your love.” Rosario said.

“You always know just what to say.” I chuckled.

“Only with you, my love. Only with you.” He whispered, picking up his pace and pushing all thought from my mind.

He moved one hand from my hair, sliding down my body to grip me and begin stroking my erection at the same pace he pressed in and out of me. I groaned at the feeling. My climax was coming even faster now that I felt him rubbing me inside and out.

I let my eyes leave Rosario’s and took in the rest of his face. It was strained. He was trying to make sure we came together. The tips of his ears must be a lot more sensitive than I realized.

Pulling him closer, I kissed him again. Our tongues wrestled as our bodies moved together. I couldn’t believe this was real. It was like a dream.

My sweet, loving boyfriend was really making love to me. We were finally together in the way I had been imagining. He was built like a god and he was really with me, loving me, joined with me, in this loving hold.

“Just a little more, baby. I’m almost there. Wait for me.” I murmured.

“You called me ‘baby’.” Rosario laughed.

“You can’t be the only one using it.” I replied.

He struck hard and I yelped his name. Rosario began stroking again. He started chanting my name, telling me how good I felt, and how much he loved me.

My body started seizing a little as the orgasm overtook me. I arched as I felt myself finish, pulsing my completion all over Rosario and my stomach. He groaned and gave a final stroke, holding tightly as I felt him pulse inside of me.

Rosario kissed me roughly. I loved everything about it. It was entirely perfect.

He pulled away and looked into my eyes. “We should go take a shower, my love. We’ve made quite a mess.”

“Was it okay?” I asked.

“You were incredible, as always. I love you so much, Sean. This is only a first for us. I can’t believe you naturally started massaging my ears. It felt so good.” Rosario smiled and kissed me briefly twice more.

“I figured there was a reason you were constantly nibbling on my ears. Come on, let’s go shower. There’s still some dried blood on you, and I want all reminders of that to be gone.” I smiled.

He pulled out slowly, making me groan. My body felt lonely without his pressed close to me. I knew we would be together again soon.

We went to the bathroom. The shower was big enough to fit at least four people and it looked like the tub could fit both of us easily. I was surprised this wasn’t the master bedroom and wondered what it must be like if this room was so luxurious.

Rosario started the water warming for our shower while I looked in the cupboard and found towels, wash cloths, soap, and bottles of shampoo and conditioner. Everything was well organized.

I entered the shower with what we needed and helped wash off what had dried on Rosario’s skin. His back and legs looked perfect, like nothing had ever happened. I silently thanked Echo for what she had done.

“That’s weird.” He said. “My other scars are all gone.”

He turned to me and I could see nothing but smooth skin and muscles. I smiled. This was my perfect boyfriend, exactly as he was meant to be.

“I guess Echo just healed everything.” I told him.

“She’s fucking amazing. The ones on my back and legs are really gone?” Rosario asked.

“Really. There’s not a single mark on you.” I insisted.

“Dear goddess. We definitely have to keep her around. That healing was astonishing.” He chuckled.

“We’ll keep her around because she’s a wonderful friend. The healing will be a bonus. I wonder what else she can do.” I hummed as I knelt down to wash Rosario’s legs and thighs.

“I don’t know, but I bet we’ll be surprised. All three of them are powerful. No one has ever been able to relieve any part of the curse for even a short time. Healing old wounds is almost impossible. That must have come from Harmony. She has the ability to erase things. It comes with being able to suck the life from something. That’s her witch affinity.” Rosario said.

“That sounds really cool. I kind of wish I’d had an affinity.” I replied quietly.

He turned to me and pulled me up to look into his eyes. Rosario caressed my face. I smiled softly.

“You’ll be the most amazing fae, Sean. You’ll never regret changing. Even if I find my true mate, I’ll reject him and stay with you.” He promised.

“You don’t have to do that, Rosario. I’m your true mate. The goddess told me I was yours. I’m never going to leave you. We’re meant to be together. You’re mine forever.” I murmured and kissed him.

He growled a little and pressed me into the cold tile wall, making me yelp and arch into him. Rosario ground into me before breaking the kiss to turn me to face the wall. I groaned as he pressed himself into me, still wet from the lube and his earlier orgasm.

“You’re mine, Sean. Really mine. I’m never letting you go.” Rosario grunted as he took me from behind.

I leaned down and arched my back. Making him hit that sweet spot inside me as he claimed me. I never wanted to belong to anyone else. I never wanted this with anyone but Rosario. He was everything to me.

Just as I thought, moving here would help me get over my crush on Gray. That was a school boy infatuation. This was real. This was something I could hold onto. This was my future. My Rosario. My true mate and true love. I would never give him up, either.

Dinner Discovery

## Chapter 126 - The Vampire's Servant

We went down to dinner when we were called and I swear Dillon, Jean-Claude, and Gray were all looking at me knowingly. Like they knew I was just ravished by my boyfriend repeatedly. I blushed and held onto Rosario’s hand.

Chairs were brought in from the kitchen to make sure everyone had a seat. I sat gingerly on mine. It would take a while before I was used to this feeling. Dillon chuckled and Jean-Claude snorted. They definitely knew.

Before the meal was served, Dillon had us all go around the table and introduce ourselves. He wanted our names, affiliations, and abilities. He said it was the best way for everyone to know everything about each other.

I was seated between Cam and Rosario, on the opposite end of the table from the vampires. Cam was next to Dillon. He had wanted to sit with Harmony, but everyone had insisted the triplets sit next to each other.

As we went around the table, I was realizing more and more that I was the weakest member of the group. Rosario stood and smiled down at me. I had barely realized we'd made it all the way over to us.

"I'm Rosario Adair. Prince of the fae who live in the human world. My magic would be most closely associated to Echo and Harmony's magic. Plants do my bidding and I can speak with them. I have four twenty-foot-long vines that I can fight with. I am an expert archer and ranked fighter among all fae in the area." He said.

Pride overcame me. My boyfriend was strong and amazing. I hadn't even realized all the other things about him. I couldn't wait to learn more.

"Where are your vines?" Dillon asked.

He held up his hands and four thick vines protruded from his forearms. Two on each arm. They danced like they were alive and I was in total shock. One came near me and I reached out to touch it. It was warm and had several deadly looking thorns on it.

"Nice." Dillon grinned.

Rosario sat next to me and looked at me. I felt my stomach flip. They were going to know that I didn't have anything to offer.

I stood up nervously. Echo smiled warmly. It made me feel a little better. If nothing else, she wanted me here.

"I'm Sean Flowers. I'm Echo's friend and Rosario's true mate. I mean... I'm friends with everyone else too, I was just Echo's friend first. I am a witch without an affinity, and I only just learned that recently so I don't know anything about witches either. I can't fight and I can't do magic.... I hope I'm not too much of a burden. I just really wanted to help." I said softly.

"I'll teach you potions and spells while I teach Valor." Preston offered. "Witches without affinities can often pull off more powerful spells because their power isn't going toward making their affinity behave. You wouldn't believe how many times I accidentally set things on fire when I was young."

"You can train in the morning with everyone else. We'll get you in fighting form." Jean-Claude told me.

"You're everyone's friend and you already helped a lot, Sean." Gray grinned at me.

"If not for you, we wouldn't have gotten all of the notebooks from your father. Lila has already been making a lot of headway on the spells." Victor smiled.

“You’re more than just my true mate, you’re the one who made me see the world around me and you brought me to this place where I’m safe to be myself. Please stop thinking you’re not worthy of everything. You deserve everything.” Rosario said, kissing my hand.

I looked over at Echo who was smiling even more brightly and nodding. I smiled and squeezed Rosario’s hand before sitting, gently. Cam stood up.

“I’m Cam Blake. I’m a werewolf with the Hallowed Moon Pack. I’m Harmony’s mate and Gray’s best friend. Just a standard werewolf no ranked blood or weird backstory and no, you don’t have to make me feel better about it. I’m happy to be here with my mate and I’m happy to help my friend.” Cam said with a little bow and sat back down.

“Now that’s all settled, let’s have some dinner. I know Lisa and Wendell worked hard on it and we appreciate them coming to stay with us and help around the house.” Dillon announced.

With that, dinner was served. It looked amazing. They had cooked three large roasts with side dishes of broccoli, brussels sprouts, and honeyed carrots. There was a mountain of mashed potatoes and large bowls of gravy. In front of each of the vampires, and Echo, they put a dish with something orange in it. I caught the scent of fish.

“What’s that?” I asked Echo.

“Salmon mousse. It’s mixed with human blood. It makes the whole having to have blood thing easier on me, and it makes it so the vampires can eat with us, instead of having a liquid diet.” She explained.

I blanched. I had no idea that something like that could be a thing. It sounded disgusting. I dished up some of the other foods that were there, opting for the broccoli, because I hated brussels sprouts.

Everyone chatted quietly. I watched Echo eat her mousse, then pile a healthy serving of all the veggies onto one plate and start mowing through them like they were candy. She still wiggled when she ate.

The werewolves all piled their plates high, like this was their last meal or something. Even Harmony’s plate was completely filled. She ate like a teenage boy who skipped a meal.

“I just don’t think it’s fair. Sean and Rosario get to sleep together; you get to sleep with Jean-Claude. I should get to sleep with Harmony.” Cam was whining to Dillon.

“Jean-Claude is my husband. We were married by human and supernatural law. You shouldn’t be complaining to me. I didn’t do the room assignments. That was all Echo.” Dillon countered.

“Echo, why didn’t you put me with Harmony?” Cam asked.

“Because she didn’t want you sleeping with our sister.” Val growled.

“Stop that, Val.” Echo chided. “Cam. It was all very simple. Val wouldn’t let you sleep with Harmony. He would suggest Harmony sleep with me instead. Me smelling like a werewolf would upset Victor. So I couldn’t have that. Then, Val would have suggested that he and Harmony be roomed together. That would have upset you, even though they’re sister and brother. You wouldn’t want to sleep with Gray and my uncles don’t know each other well enough to be okay with sleeping together. I already moved all of the vampires into one room, so the only option was putting Sean and Rosario together because it was the most peaceful arrangement. I’m not having any of my guests sleeping on the couch. This is the only thing that works.”

Her argument was well reasoned. I could follow her line of thought fairly well. There really was no other option.

“Echo, you know how hard this is for me. Being away from my mate.” Cam pled.

“Yes, like I have to be away from mine. Unlike me, you weren’t rooming with Harmony on the pack lands. If I can survive not sleeping with Victor and Gray, you can survive not sleeping with Harmony. That is the end of this discussion.” Echo said very finally.

“They could at least be a little quieter when they’re fucking.” He grumbled.

I blushed and focused on my plate. My stomach was in knots. They heard us. That’s why they were looking at us like that. Oh, god.

“Next time, make sure you close the window.” Dillon chuckled.

“Will do.” Rosario answered with a snort.

I hit him with my elbow, making a few people laugh. I was totally embarrassed. I couldn’t believe my first time was overheard by pretty much everyone in the house.

“Don’t worry, Sean. No one is judging you. It’s just another way that you and Rosario show your love for each other. Cam is just grumpy. He’ll get over it once he realizes that he gets to be around Harmony even more while they’re living here. Before, he was living with his parents at their house and Harmony was living in the pack house. They didn’t get to spend a huge amount of time together. Now, they’ll be together from when they wake up until they go to bed. It’s really much better than he thinks.” Echo told me.

“You don’t need to be trying to get in my sister’s bed.” Val grumbled.

“You just don’t understand what it’s like to have a mate, Val.” Cam growled.

I looked up at Val. He seemed hurt by that. I realized both of his sisters had mates, but he didn’t. For siblings who did everything together, that had to hurt.

“Val has a mate somewhere.” Harmony insisted. “He’s going to find her.”

“Witches don’t have mates, Harmony.” Preston said.

“Grace did. She was Grigori’s Solus Amor. Our mother was our father’s mate and she was a witch. Val will have a mate. I just know he will.” Echo told him.

“What an odd coincidence.” He murmured.

“What?” I asked.

“My grandmother’s name was Grace. She actually came from this area. I thought it was interesting that the kids all ended up here.” Preston said.

“Was her last name Aimes?” Echo questioned breathily.

“Yes! How did you know that?” He grinned.

Echo and Harmony covered their mouths and looked at each other with wide eyes before Echo looked down the table to Victor. He was staring at her in shock.

“Your grandmother was the daughter of the witch who cursed this territory.” Victor said. “She was the mate of the Master of the territory. Sean is the great grandson of her oldest brother.”

Echo was my cousin... I couldn’t believe it. Our family had been brought back together. That was why The Old Man liked her so much! He hated anyone who wasn’t family!

“Tell me more about this curse. I want to help. If my ancestor did this, I need to help undo it. Like Sean here, I’m a part of this.” Preston insisted.

“After the meal, we can go to my office and Finn will tell you everything. I want to make sure the children all have time to get settled before bed. They have school in the morning.” Victor answered.

“I’m done now.” Preston said and stood.

“I can go now. You good, Vic? Or should you come with?” Finn asked.

“I’m fine. We’re going to see if the triplets can push off the curse’s hold on me. It would be nice to get some work done without having to make sure several times that Grayson hasn’t slipped into Echo’s bed.” Victor replied.

“Let’s go, Preston. It’s a long ass story and I’m sure you’ll want to see what we have.” Finn said, standing.

They left the room and there was an excited feeling in the air, which didn’t seem to affect Echo. She looked sad. I didn’t like that.

“Echo? Why do you look sad? Isn’t it a good thing that we found this out? He could help with the curse.” I whispered.

“If Grace had stayed with Grigori... I wouldn’t exist and Victor would have been alone.” She sniffled. “I wish they could have been happy together, but I hurt thinking that they had to be torn apart for me to be here today.”

Harmony and Val each held her hand. Gray’s brow furrowed and I knew he wanted to hold Echo. Victor put his hand over his heart like it was hurting.

“Maybe that was part of why Fenton separated them.” I suggested.

“What do you mean, Sean?” Rosario asked.

“This whole supernatural triad thing. It would be really powerful. Maybe he saw that marrying Grace to the other witch would create it and he wanted that power for our family.” I said.

Victor stood. “That was precisely what I was thinking. I need to go talk to Preston. I can’t believe I didn’t smell that he was a dhampyr. Why didn’t anyone else smell it?”

“Because he’s not.” Samuel answered. “My brother’s mother was part vampire. Not enough to be considered a hybrid, but enough to pass on the blood. She died in a rogue attack when Adam was young. I was adopted by his father when my mother became his second chance mate.”

“Why didn’t you say something before?” Harmony growled.

“It’s not like I’m proud of it. The vampire blood my brother had made you three possible and fated our pack to be wiped out! I didn’t want to give you anything I didn’t have to. I lost everyone I loved in that attack. All I had left was my mate and her family. All I could think of was how my brother had brought this curse on us all. That was before I started to get to know you three. I see my stepdad and my brother in you all the time. Sometimes, I even see my mom in you, even though she wasn’t related.” He admitted.

“I understand, Uncle Samuel. Thank you for telling us now. It helps us understand where our family comes from.” Echo said with a smile. “Let’s all finish our meal. I can show you my moon garden before bed. It will help calm everyone down.”

Victor and Talia left the room, presumably to go add this to their information about Echo, Harmony, and Valor. The room was quiet and tense. I didn’t realize meals here would be an event too. At least we were a few steps closer. Maybe this meant there was hope for getting rid of the curse.

Relief



## Chapter 127 - The Vampire's Servant

[Echo]

After we finished eating, Val and Harmony followed me to Victor's office. We knocked on the door and were called in. Marius was there with a woman. She was sitting on one of the armchairs, leaning over the notebooks I'd gotten from Sean's dad. This must be Lila.

She was thin, with long legs, dark blonde hair, and deep blue eyes, which seemed to be focused entirely on me as she stood up and gasped. Marius looked at her curiously. I wondered what had shocked her.

"Grace?" She whispered.

I looked at Harmony. She shrugged and we turned back. Lila stepped around the coffee table.

"They look just like Grace, Mary Kathrine, and Fenton Jr. Where did they come from?" Lila said softly.

"I'm Echo Nightshade. You're Lila, right?" I asked.

"You sound just like Grace, too. You're Marius' children. The supernatural triad. No wonder Fenton didn't want to let her stay with Grigori. Can I touch you?" She asked.

"Don't touch them." Preston growled. "She's a dark witch, I'm fine with her helping out, but don't trust her for anything else."

"Lila wouldn't do anything to anger me. She knows how I feel about the children." Marius replied.

"I just want to feel that they're real. They look like people I haven't seen in decades, please." Lila said.

I reached out my hand to her. She grinned and took it, pulling me into a hug. She held me tightly.

"I'm so sorry I couldn't convince him not to send you away." She murmured.

Hugging her back I whispered. "It's okay, Lila. Everything worked out for the best."

"And you're mated to the Master again. The goddess always gets what she wants. I'm betting this triad would have existed even if Grace had stayed with Grigori." Lila said, pulling away.

Harmony and Val each shook her hand. She didn't try to hug them, only me. I couldn't imagine the guilt she felt. If I helped relieve any of it, then I was happy.

She returned to her seat. "Like I said, I made copies of these. If you think you can get more than a witch more than four times your age, then go for it. I've found the spell on the fae. It's a dark spell to reveal hidden things. He must have gotten ahold of hair or something from a fae to make it work. It's how I find them. I have skin from an old sacrifice."

I didn't like how that sounded. Marius looked enamored of her. I glanced over to Talia, who wore a smirk. He really was involved with Lila.

"I'll look into the curses he could have used on the werewolves if you want to focus entirely on the ones for the vampires." Preston offered stiffly.

"Fine. Let me know if you can't figure it out. I'm being well-compensated for helping out. Is there anything else you need me for?" Lila asked.

"I don't think there's anything else. Have you figured out how to break the spells that were identified?" He questioned.

"We need to find where he buried the hidden things spell. Then we just burn it and it should break the spell on the fae. As for the hearts' forgetting spell, well, you know that one, right?" She sighed.

"It's unbreakable. Grace is dead and so is Grigori. In essence, that one was gone once she died." Preston nodded.

"Does that mean the curse is permanent?" Val asked.

"It should only exist until the ones involved are all dead, or they find each other and remember." Lila answered.

"Could he have done that spell on everyone?" I asked.

"What do you mean?" Lila tilted her head.

"We found that he took love from everyone. The wolves would have lost their mate connection, according to the journals. That was what the note told Alpha William Padua." Talia said.

"That bastard. It's possible to modify most spells. It wouldn't cause the wolves to be trapped, though. That had to be a separate spell. Good. That will help Preston. Two spells, hearts' forgetting and something to trap them. I'm betting he did the same spell on the fae along with the hidden things spell." Lila said.

"He probably did it on the vampires, too. No vampire has found their Solus Amor in this territory since Grigori died. Not until Victor found me." I added.

“If not for Queen Bellamy, I still would only suspect without confirmation.” Victor said.

“Lila, Uncle Preston, will you two stay here while we try to push back the curse on Victor? I’d like a witch’s opinion.” Val asked.

“You think you can push back the curse?” Lila snorted.

“We did it a couple days ago on some wolves at school by accident.” I told her.

Her eyes widened. “The power of a triad can never be predicted. You could have made it stronger, you got lucky. I’ll stay and watch. I hope it works the way you want it to.”

“Playing with unknown magic is dangerous.” Preston sighed. “Anything could have happened. I’ll stay, too.”

“Victor, I need you to stand over here. We’re going to surround you so we can focus it.” I said.

He nodded and came to where we were. We stood around him, but didn’t join hands yet. We had talked about it at school a little. We would focus on Victor, then join hands and try to direct the power at him.

I put my hands out. Val and Harmony took them. The breeze started. It swirled around us before entering the area where Victor was. I could see his clothing and hair reacting as if he were in the center of a vortex.

A pained look started to cross his face. He groaned and bent over like something was hurting him. We kept going.

We figured the longer we did this, the longer it would last. None of us had figured on it hurting him. I wanted to let go, but this was important.

Victor dropped to his knees. I felt tears in my eyes, but blinked them away. This would be worth it. We were going to get rid of the curse. I would have my Victor back.

After a while, Victor took a deep breath and stood. He looked into my eyes and caressed my cheek. It was my Victor.

I let go of Val and Harmony and wrapped my arms around Victor. He hugged me back. I looked up at him and there was no angry glow in his perfectly violet eyes.

“We have to test it.” He whispered.

“Harmony, call Gray in here.” I said, pulling away from Victor.

Victor walked across the room. Finn, Marius, and Talia stood behind him, ready to grab him if he attacked. Harmony nodded to me and stood aside with Val.

Gray came in the room and looked around. He waved to Lila, but stayed in the doorway. I went to him and pulled him into the room.

“Echo. Don’t touch me.” He hissed, looking over to where Victor was.

I pulled harder and wrapped my arms around his waist. A hug was safer than a kiss. It wouldn’t make Val upset, too. I didn’t want to deal with two angry men if it didn’t work.

Gray tried to pull me off of him. I looked up into his eyes and he stopped fighting me. He caressed my cheek like Victor had and his eyes softened.

“I feel nothing about this.” Victor announced.

I grinned and so did Gray. He kissed me softly. I pulled away a little. I didn’t want Val getting upset after I’d told him I wasn’t like Harmony with my mates.

Turning to Victor, I bounced a little. There was no angry look, just the hungry look he used to always get when he would watch me and Gray together. I felt my body tighten, but shook it off.

“Do I get a little kiss as well, or did we just do this so I could watch?” Victor asked with a chuckle.

Quickly, I crossed the room and stood on my tiptoes so I could kiss Victor too. He smiled as he pulled away. I was thrilled that he didn’t grab me and force a more passionate kiss like he would have with the curse.

“I’m so sorry I scared you earlier, princess. I didn’t intend for that to happen.” He whispered.

“It’s alright, Victor. I knew it wasn’t you.”

“That’s so cute. Makes me want to do some kissing of my own.” Lila purred.

“Calm down, witch. You have work to do still.” Marius replied.

“Yes, daddy.” She sighed and went back to talking with Preston.

Victor looked like he was trying not to laugh. I smiled. Maybe this was what Marius needed. A relationship with someone else. Maybe it would make him really happy. I turned to look at him, and he didn’t look happy.

“There shall be a punishment for that.” He quietly growled.

Lila didn’t look afraid. She actually looked excited. I didn’t understand it, but I was too afraid of getting her in more trouble to ask him not to punish her.

“Echo, Grayson, I’d like to speak to you in private. Since the curse is no longer affecting me, I feel it will be safe enough without a chaperone.” Victor said.

“At the minimum, this suppression should last until you wake tomorrow. With luck, it will last longer. For now, it’s best if you can make some plans while you’re in your right mind.” Talia replied.

Victor took my hand and guided me to the door. Gray took my other hand and followed us out into the hallway. Victor led us to the library and opened the door.

I could see Rosario. He was standing with one hand on an upper shelf and leaning a little in. There was another hand pressed up against the side of the shelf, gripping it. I could see the movement of Rosario’s hips and realized what was going on.

“In the library? Really?” Gray scoffed.

They froze. There was some whispering and I heard a zipper go up. I bit my lips together. They certainly were a frisky pair.

Rosario turned with a slightly annoyed expression on his face. Sean looked embarrassed. I sighed.

“Please don’t do things like that in the library. You have a room for that. Anyone could have walked in here.” I chided.

“I was just looking around. I swear! He’s the one who came up and started molesting me.” Sean insisted.

“He didn’t try to stop me. Sorry, babe. I’m not going down for this one alone.” Rosario chuckled.

“You’re an ass.” Sean grumbled.

“And you love me too much to ever give me up.” Rosario replied.

“Get out. Grown-ups need this room.” Gray said.

We moved from the doorway as they hurried out of the room. I smiled after them. They had gotten their relationship sorted fairly quickly. I was happy with that, but still mad at Rosario’s dad.

Victor closed the door and we all went to sit on the couch and chairs in the center of the room. I wondered what Victor wanted to talk about. There was so much going on, that it could be pretty much anything.

“Echo, Grayson. If this suppression doesn’t last, then I want the two of you to have me locked up while I sleep. The way the curse was going, I was about to do something regrettable. Something I didn’t want to do.” Victor admitted.

“Victor.” I whispered.

“What do you mean?” Gray asked.

“Most of my struggles in the past couple of days had been fighting the curse when it told me to mark Echo, no matter what she said. Lately, the curse has been making me indulge in behaviors I dislike. It tries to make me do things to Echo while she sleeps. It urges me to steal things from her. To take her blood. I can’t even name some of the things it’s made me do recently.” Victor replied. “And it still whispers through my mind with thoughts of killing Grayson as he sleeps.”

I stiffened. There was so much more to this than what I knew. He stole from me? I didn’t even realize anything was missing.

“What did you steal?” I asked.

He looked very uncomfortable. Victor reached into his pocket and pulled out a pair of my panties. I covered my mouth and felt myself turn red.

“Dude. You stole her panties? Not cool.” Gray scolded. “What would Talia say if she knew you were stealing panties?”

“She told me to make sure I put the ones I was finished with back in Echo’s laundry so she wouldn’t realize I took them.” Victor answered.

“All of you vampires are perverts.” Gray groaned.

“I am not! This isn’t me! It was the curse! I don’t steal panties!” Victor exclaimed.

“Of course you don’t. You didn’t steal the little lacey panties Echo was wearing under that babydoll nightie the first time she wore it.” Gray scoffed.

Victor looked away. My mouth was open in shock. I had been looking everywhere for those panties!

“Victor?” I asked.

“It was for the memories.” He mumbled.

Gray started laughing. I couldn’t help but giggle a little. He looked so embarrassed and adorable. I missed this Victor. The one who was sentimental and a little silly.

“Please. Promise me that you’ll take my body to the cell in the basement and lock me up if the curse comes back. It will be ready tomorrow. I don’t want to do something unforgivable.” Victor pled.

“What else is there? There’s something you’re not saying.” Gray insisted.

“It keeps saying that Finn and Talia are scheming with Talon and Silence to kill me and take over my territory. It makes me want to try and fight my sire. Talia may forgive me, she may even let me live, but she would never forgive me if I killed Finn.” He admitted.

“We’ll do it, Victor. If this wears off, Gray and I will lock you up while you sleep. You don’t have to worry. You won’t hurt anyone.” I promised.

“We’ve got you.” Gray nodded.

“Thank you. I feel better knowing that you’ll honor my wishes.” Victor smiled slightly.

I stood up and grabbed Victor’s hand, pulling him to the couch. After I pushed him down to sit, I did the same to Gray. I squeezed in between them and pulled their arms around me. They both kissed the top of my head as they held me.

More than anything, I missed this. I missed being with both of them. I missed the closeness of our relationship. I hoped this suppression lasted a long time. I didn’t want to lose it again.

A New Day

## Chapter 128 - The Vampire's Servant

Waking up the next morning was difficult. I had the most wonderful dreams about being with Victor and Gray again. I didn’t want to wake up and go back to the reality of my cold bed.

Last night they asked if they could sleep with me. I told them no because I had said that I wouldn’t make love to either of them until the curse was ended. I had to stick to my guns, no matter how much I wanted to give in. And I really wanted to give in.

I quickly got dressed for training. With luck, that would quell my body’s desire to get physical. I wanted them both so much, I thought I would explode. I didn’t know I could feel like this.

In the yard, Jean-Claude was talking to everyone about what trainings would be like. Sean looked pretty tired. He probably wasn’t used to getting up this early. He waved at me and I went to stand with him.

“You look exhausted. Are you going to be okay?” I asked quietly.

“I want to be stronger. I want to kick Rosario’s dad’s ass. If training like a werewolf will get me there, I’m gonna do it.” He replied.

“It’s partly my fault. I kept him up last night.” Rosario winked.

“Will you stop telling people that?” Sean growled.

“It’s true.” Rosario grinned.

“That doesn’t mean you have to tell everyone you see!” Sean hissed.

“I remember training after being kept up by my mates. It’ll be tough, but you’ll do fine.” I replied wistfully.

“Don’t encourage him by acting like this is normal. I need at least eight hours of sleep before physical activity. I only barely passed gym class.” He groaned.

“Sean, Rosario, Echo! Pay attention!” Jean-Claude shouted.

We jumped a little and looked at him. I felt badly about letting myself get distracted. He appeared mildly annoyed.

“I don’t like repeating myself, but I will this once. Pay attention in training, it could save you from punishments.” He warned.

“Sorry.” We said.

“As I was saying, we start training with a run to wake us up. Vampires, three laps around the property, that includes you, Echo. Werewolves and fae, two laps. Humans, one lap. Try to run at your top human speed everyone. Sean and Preston, you can take time to walk if you need to. Try to run as much as possible. Val, I want you to go two laps with the rest of the wolves. Meet back here when you’re done everyone. Let’s go!” Jean-Claude called out.

I rushed to run by Talia. She was the one who set our pace. She never ran at her top speed, just so I could keep up. That didn’t mean she didn’t push me. I think she ran a little faster each day to build me up.

We ran around the path. It was really pretty in the dim early morning light. I always enjoyed our run.

Soon, we were passing Sean, who looked like he was about to die. He was trying as hard as he could. Uncle Preston was farther ahead. A while after that, we were passing Rosario. He was pretty far behind the werewolves, but not struggling as much as Sean was.



When we passed my sister and brother, I waved to them. They smiled and waved back. Gray stumbled a bit as he watched me run. It made me feel really good to see that I had that effect on him.

Talia poked me. “You’re going all red, is that from the running or from seeing your mate nearly face-plant from watching you run?”

“A... little... of... both.” I puffed.

“It’s much easier when you don’t need to breathe. You’ll get there. You’re already running as fast as a young vampire. We’ll slow down for the last lap.” She said.

I nodded, not wanting to exhaust myself with talking. I learned pretty quickly that I couldn’t run and talk at the same time. Everything started burning a little in the third lap. I was used to it and thankful that we slowed down a bit.

When we went past Sean again, he was dark red and listing quite a lot. I didn’t think he’d make it all the way around. I slowed to match his pace.

“Are you alright, Sean? You don’t look so good.” I asked.

“I don’t feel so good.” He panted.

I stopped in front of him. Talia came back from where she’d been running ahead. I never stopped on our runs, and it made her curious.

“Get on my back, Sean. If you get sick, you won’t be able to finish training for the day.” I told him.

“Echo, I should do this on my own.” He puffed, putting his hands on his knees and looking like he was going to be sick.

“This is a few miles, Sean. You’re not even halfway there. Come on. I can get you back to where we work out and you can rest before the wolves finish their run.” I pushed.

“I really am useless.” He sighed.

“No, you’re just not ready for this level. I’ll talk to Jean-Claude. We need to think of you and your health. You won’t learn anything if you burn out. Get on my back, Sean.” I ordered.

Sean grumbled, but did as I said. I figured out my balance and started running. Talia laughed as she followed.

I picked up the pace as I went. Nothing was burning as much anymore. The little break had been enough for my vampire abilities to refresh my body. I ran as if I wasn’t carrying a whole other person.

We passed Uncle Preston who shouted ‘no fair’ at us. I laughed. Sean squeezed me a little harder. Rosario did the same as Uncle Preston. They were far enough along that I didn’t worry.

Normally, on a run, I slow down to join the wolves in the final stretch of their laps. This time, I went right past them.

“That’s cheating! They’re cheating!” Cam shouted.

“If you can yell, you can run faster, Cameron.” Jean-Claude called back to him. “Echo, what are you doing?”

“Sean can’t run the distance you set for him. He was looking really bad, so I’m giving him a ride back to the yard.” I explained.

“Fair enough, how far did he make it?” He asked.

“About a third of the way. Maybe he should just do laps around the house while we run. We can talk about it later.” I said as I started running faster.

Once we reached the training area in the yard, I let Sean down. He plopped onto the grass and laid back. I sat down next to him.

“That was fun.” Sean laughed. “I’m sorry I was a burden on you.”

“I’ve never carried anyone while I ran. That was definitely different.” I chuckled.

“You actually ran faster than we were running before, Echo.” Talia said. “I think you’ve been holding back. You ran almost as fast as an adult aged vampire. As fast as Victor.”

I looked at her, my mouth open in shock. I didn’t think I was running faster, it seemed like a natural pace to me. I was pleasantly surprised.

“I just knew I needed to get Sean back here. I wasn’t paying attention.” I admitted.

“You were paying attention before?”

“Yes, I was trying to keep up with you and your pace.” I replied.

“I think, maybe, you shouldn’t pay attention. Tomorrow, I’ll run at my normal pace and you run at whatever pace feels right. I’m betting you’re going to be a lot faster and less tired. I think you’ve been slowing yourself down and that’s what is causing your struggle.” She said.

“You think so? I’ll try my best.” I smiled.

“Today, when you’re sparring with Dillon. Don’t think. Just act. I bet you’ll surprise him.” Talia chuckled.

I nodded and talked to Sean for a little while. Soon, he was sitting up, too. By the time Uncle Preston trailed in, Sean wasn't a purplish green color anymore and was able to stand.

Jean-Claude told everyone where they'd be going. Talia and Gray went to the front of the house to work. It kept him from getting distracted by me. Everyone else was going to do what Amy called repetitive motion training. They would repeatedly work on the same move a certain amount of times, then another, and after three moves, they would be combined and everyone would do the same fighting combination.

Dillon and I would join them for that, then move farther off for our sparring when they broke up for the same. I thought about what Talia said. If I didn't think about what I was doing, would I move better?

After we finished practicing our moves, Jean-Claude started teaming people up for sparring. Dillon and I went to our usual sparring place. He was grinning.

"What are you so happy about?" I asked.

"Amy called last night. She's pregnant. I can't wait to be an uncle again! I was thinking, after this assignment, I would talk to Jean-Claude about adopting. I want a little pup to look after and raise with my friends. Maybe we can get a few. A little one, a medium one, and a teen. Just poof a whole family. Wouldn't that be wonderful?" He gushed.

"I'm glad Amy got what she wanted. That seems like a lot of work. I was thinking I'd give it a year or so before talking about kids with Gray and Victor. I have a very long life ahead of me." I smiled.

"True. You're going to be here long after I'm gone. I hope you bring your babies to see ours. I want to see what a baby dhampyr looks like." Dillon winked. "And a little hybrid pup."

"They look just like any other babies, Dillon." I laughed. "You're so weird."

"Are you ready to fight?" He asked.

"Let me take a moment." I requested.

He nodded and I closed my eyes and took a breath. Don't think. I cleared my mind. Opening my eyes, I nodded to him and assumed my stance.

Instead of focusing on him, I focused on me. On the things that I felt. The urges inside me and what my body said I should do.

I found myself moving almost as if I was in a dream. The world slowed down around me. I wasn't as caught off-guard by Dillon's movements and it was like I barely had to flex and my body would do what it needed to do. I was almost in a meditative state.

“Fuck! I give! Damn it, Echo. You’re going to dislocate my arm if you don’t stop!” Dillon shouted.

Startled, I looked down. My foot was in the middle of Dillon’s back and he was face down on the ground with his arm twisted behind him. I let go and jumped away.

“I’m so sorry! Are you alright?” I asked.

“That was fucking perfect. I couldn’t land a single hit on you and every punch you threw landed. How the hell did you learn to fight like that, cookie?” He said.

“I just didn’t think about it. Are you sure you’re alright?” I asked.

“I’m great. I think this means you need to train with a vampire. We should see if Marius can start training with us, so he can train you.” Dillon grinned.

He worked with me a little more on striking through the target and not at the target. I was excited to tell Victor how well I did in training. He would be proud of me and I loved that feeling.

When training was done, we met up with everyone in the main section again. Uncle Samuel was looking at Harmony and Val with pride. I knew they had to have done well.

Cam had his arm around Harmony and was whispering something in her ear. Whatever it was, it made her giggle. Rosario was fawning over Sean, who appeared to have a black eye. Uncle Preston was near them apologizing.

I walked over to Sean and took his face in my hands. I closed my eyes and thought of the way Sean normally looks. I imagined the swelling going down and the bruise going away.

“I will never get used to that.” Rosario gasped.

Opening my eyes, I saw that Sean looked completely normal. Uncle Preston seemed relieved. I patted Sean’s cheek and turned away. Just in time to see Gray come from around the house.

It was like the whole world fell away. He’d taken off his t-shirt and there was sweat covering his body. It sparkled in the early morning light, like diamonds on his skin.

There were darkened patches of skin, that I knew were bruises, but, somehow, made him look more attractive. A little dangerous. The knowledge that he’d just come back from fighting a vampire wasn’t lost on me. I knew the tremendous strain he had to have put on himself.

He picked up a bottle of water from the cooler Lisa had brought out while we were running and drank a little before pouring some onto his face and body. My own body reacted to that. My eyes tracked the rivulets of water as they cascaded over his muscles.

I desperately wanted to lick one of them. I wanted to taste him so badly it hurt. I pressed my thighs together, trying to control the pounding urge between my legs that told me to tackle him and ride him until I couldn't ride him any longer.

“Damn. What a show off. I could do that if I wanted to.” Rosario groused. “Stop staring at him, Sean.”

“Sorry, what was that, babe? I got a little distracted.” Sean replied.

Licking my lips, I turned away from Gray and his wonderful water show. I needed to get a grip on myself. I couldn't go panting after Gray at every turn. That would severely undermine my decision to wait until the curse was ended.

“Echo, how was your training?” Gray said from right behind me.

I jumped and squeaked. He had been so close I could practically feel his breath on my ear. It sent a shiver through me that ended right between my legs. A heat settled in my lower stomach.

“I didn't mean to startle you.” He chuckled and sniffed the air. “Mmm. I love how you smell today, Echo.”

“I need to go get ready for school.” I replied and walked away.

“Yeah. I could use a nice hot shower after all that working out.” Gray murmured as he followed me into the house. “Do you need someone to help you wash your back, angel?”

“No, thank you.” I told him and ran as fast as I could to my room.

Once I was safely in my room, I locked the door and breathed a sigh of relief. My entire body felt hot and I stripped off my clothes on my way to the bathroom. I'd pick them up later.

I turned the water on a little cool. I needed something to take the heat out of my body. It was getting annoying. All I could think of was the fact that Gray was in his own shower, naked.

Stepping into the water, I basked in the cool, clean, water removing the grit of dried sweat and dirt off me. I cleaned my hair thoroughly. The water finally started making me feel normal again.

After I was clean, I dried off, picked up my clothes, and dressed for the day. I headed down for breakfast. Victor met me at the dining room door and led me to the seat next to his. Gray was in the seat on the other side of me.

I sat down and both Victor and Gray each took one of my hands and kissed them. I felt the heat growing in my stomach again. I almost moaned as each of them kissed and nibbled my fingers, palm, and wrist.

They suddenly released my hands and turned their attention to chatting with each other. I squirmed in my seat with the uncomfortable feeling growing deep inside me. Val walked into the room and I suddenly knew why they'd stopped like that.

The ache and heat stayed there for the rest of the meal. When Victor hugged me and gave me a kiss before I left for school, I practically melted in his arms. I could feel his hardness pressing against me as he sniffed deeply and groaned.

Gray did the same thing before I got in Val's car to head to school. I didn't trust myself in the car, alone, with Gray. It was a wise decision that I hated every moment of, but I was not going to give in to my urges.

I was going to resolve this curse and spend a whole week doing everything I dreamed of with my mates. It was the only thing I could think of to relieve the dull ache that was starting to become part of my daily life.

Trespassing

## Chapter 129 - The Vampire's Servant

[Sean]

Training in the morning had almost killed me. I was really lucky Echo had been there to save me from the run. I vowed to try harder. It would take a while before my body was trained enough for me to do that entire run.

Riding on her back had been like flying. I was amazed. I didn't think she was strong enough to hold me, let alone run with me on her back like that. To look at her, you would think Echo was a weak girl.

I rode in Rosario's car to school. He explained to me how his mom had taken him out to buy a car as soon as he said he was moving into Echo's house. It was nice to know we would have some sort of freedom to come and go as we pleased.

The drive to school was relaxing in a way riding the bus had never been. I didn't have to deal with the noise, the occasional kid deciding to pick on me, or the loneliness that had been relieved when Echo came along.

When we got to school, I walked Rosario to his class and kissed him before heading to my own. It was a chaste kiss, appropriate for school, but with a little heat that just came from our attraction and love for each other. I would miss seeing him until lunch.

We only had two classes together and they were in the afternoon. I went to my homeroom class. Terry and Elle were there, but Echo wasn't yet.

"Hey, guys. How have you been? You haven't talked to me much recently." I said.

They looked at each other. Elle seemed nervous. Terry gave her a brief nod before turning back to me.

"You've just been so busy with Rosario; we haven't wanted to take you away from your first real relationship. We worried about you for a long time. Elle was worried that you were lonely and might not think you deserved a relationship. No other girl seemed to catch your attention until Rosario. We're happy for you, Sean." Terry said earnestly.

"You know you two can sit with us at lunch sometimes. You don't always have to go off with other friends or on your own. You're still coming to game night on Saturday, right?" I asked.

"Of course we are!" Elle grinned. "The last adventure was so much fun. I can't wait to continue the story this weekend. Is Rosario going to join us?"

"If it's okay with you two. I felt like she was a good addition to the group last week." I replied.

"She really was. I think it was nice having another girl at the game. I thought she would be too... and I don't mean to be offensive, but too stuck up to join a game like ours." Elle admitted.

I smiled. "There are a lot of things about Rosario that no one knows. She's different from anyone else I've ever met."

"You sure seem to be in love." Terry chuckled.

"I think she's 'the one' for me. I'm never giving Rosario up." I answered.

Echo walked in and sat down. She turned to face the rest of us. Echo waved to Elle, who waved back.

"Did you guys hear that Melissa is throwing a party?" Elle said, changing the subject. "It's a graduation party on the night of the last day of school. She said everyone is invited. Do you think her final attempt to be remembered as one of the cool kids will work?"

I laughed. Melissa had been trying to make herself 'cool' since seventh grade. She actually used to hang out with me and my friends in elementary school. Melissa decided to rebrand herself and cut off her relationship with us.

"Unfortunately for Melissa, that's not going to be possible. The only name she made for herself was as the girl who would date any guy who was even mildly popular. You remember how she went after Valor Gale and Scott Timmons at the same time? Then she dumped Scott and

pretended it was because he cheated? All of her boyfriends have been plots to get attention.” I scoffed.

“That girl tried to date Val?” Echo asked.

“Still tries. She’s convinced that one day, he’ll see the light and become her boyfriend. It’s not happening though. She went crying to Val saying she made the wrong choice with Scott, because he cheated on her. Val told her nothing about her was even remotely appealing to him. He had been happy when she ended up with Scott because she annoyed Val. And he said it in front of everyone in the cafeteria.” Terry snorted.

Mr. Taylor called for attention and went over the roll call and news for the day, which was mostly reminders about the testing schedule for next week. The whole week was only half days. With Friday being yearbook day.

My next few classes were pretty simple. I turned in projects and papers that were due and mostly read. In the winding down week before school ended, there were a lot of movies shown and general goofing off.

I went out to head to lunch. I didn’t like going back and forth to my locker, so I always carried my backpack. It ensured that I was able to meet with everyone for lunch quickly, since my locker was on the other side of the building.

Suddenly, there was a squeal from behind me. I turned just in time to catch a falling girl. Luckily, I wasn’t too weak from training still and I was able to stop her from hitting the ground.

“Damn it! These damned heels.” She grumbled as I helped her stand again. “I think I twisted my ankle.”

“Let me help you to the nurse’s office.” I offered.

“Thanks, Sean.” She replied.

It was then that I recognized her. It was Melissa. She was wearing a lot of makeup, a skirt which could not possibly be dress code appropriate, and six inch heels. She looked like a hooker.

I put my arm around her waist and helped her limp to the office. She gripped the hand that was around her waist and had the other arm up over my shoulders. Melissa was only a few inches shorter than me, but the heels made her closer to Rosario’s height.

When we finally reached the nurse’s office, Mrs. Patrick was heading off to her lunch. I explained what happened and she told me to help get the ankle wrapped and get Melissa an ice pack before locking up.



Mrs. Patrick trusted me. I spent a lot of the first two years of high school in her office because I was being bullied by an older boy. I started helping out in the nurse's office since I was there so much.

I settled Melissa on the cot there and gently removed her heels. Those things looked dangerous. I couldn't imagine what she was thinking. I pulled a chair over for her to rest her foot on while I got an icepack and an ACE bandage.

When I returned, I moved her leg and sat in the chair so I could wrap it. The ankle was a little swollen. I got to work.

Melissa kept moving her foot and I was getting frustrated. It was like she was trying to make this take longer. I wanted to go to lunch and see Rosario. I missed being away from him even if it was for a few hours.

The fourth time the wrap loosened because she wiggled her foot in my lap, I grew frustrated.

"Will you stop moving so I can wrap this? You'll need to go get your gym shoes. You shouldn't put those heels on until your ankle is better." I told her.

"I'm sorry, Sean. It tickled. I'll do better." She said, moving her other foot up onto the edge of the cot.

I wondered if she knew she was flashing me. She was lucky I wasn't a different boy. There are guys who would try to take advantage of a situation like this.

Being all alone in any room with a flat surface would be enough enticement for them. I was focused on my task and finally got her foot wrapped. I put the clips on and looked up at her.

"Is that okay? Is it too tight?" I asked.

"It's perfect.... Sean, I wanted to apologize. I've been a jerk to you ever since seventh grade. I don't know how to really get you to forgive me." Melissa murmured, lowering her other foot to the ground and leaning forward.

"You had different priorities. Don't worry about it." I shrugged.

"Seeing you with Rosario made me realize what a good man you've grown into. I really should have seen it before. You were always a good and kind friend. It was obvious that you'd be the kind of boyfriend a girl could depend on." She said softly, putting her hand on my knee.

"Um.... Thanks? I guess. You'll find someone good in college. Just take that chance to be a better person than you were in middle and high school. I'm sure it will all work out." I smiled.

"You really love her, don't you? There's no chance for me to steal you away?" Melissa asked.

I laughed. “No. None at all.”

Suddenly, Melissa leapt onto my lap, straddling me. She ground herself against me and wrapped her fingers in my hair. I tried to pull away as her mouth came down on mine.

I managed to get my hands on her shoulders and pushed as she tried to force her tongue into my mouth. I held her at arms’ length while she tried to pull me closer.

“Come on, Sean. You know you want me. I’ve seen you looking at me over the years. I dressed like this just for you. Rosario always dresses in jeans and t-shirts, like a boy. I’m a real woman. I can make you feel like a real man.” She purred.

“No. Stop, Melissa. I don’t want you. I’ve never wanted you. The only looking I did was to make sure you weren’t coming near to spit your poison at me. Get off!” I ordered.

She pulled one of my hands so it would grip her breast. I was appalled and moved it off. Her hands slipped between us and she started rubbing my crotch.

“I’ll show you how sorry I am, Sean. Let me blow you. I bet I’m better than that prude. She doesn’t know a thing about how to make a man feel good. I know she’s a virgin. She turned down every boy who asked her out for years. I’m much more experienced.” Melissa insisted.

I was trapped by her weight. I tried to get up and it made her thrust on me like a bitch in heat. I kept trying to get her hands off me. I definitely needed more training if I couldn’t even keep a teenage girl from molesting me.

“Please, stop, Melissa. I don’t want you. I really don’t. No amount of groping me is going to make me change my mind. The fact that you’ve been with a lot of guys, doesn’t turn me on. If you get off me now, I’ll forget this ever happened. You can go back to hating me or whatever.” I pled.

“Are you calling me a whore? Don’t you want me to be your whore, Sean? I’ll do whatever you want. I’ll even let you stick it wherever you want. I can be your dirty girl, Sean. You can spank me, choke me, tie me up. Come on.” She urged.

The door slammed open.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing to my boyfriend?!” Rosario shouted.

“He came on to me! I twisted my ankle and Sean said I had to repay him with a kiss. He pulled me into his lap and started groping me all over!” Melissa cried. “I tried to get him to stop!”

“Bullshit! You get your skanky ass off my boyfriend right fucking now or I’m going to break my rule about fighting in school and I’ll whip your ass.” Rosario growled.

“How dare you!? He came on to me. You’ll see when he stands up, he’s hard as a rock. Just from having me in his lap and trying to get it on with me.”

“I don’t give a flying fuck if he’s hard, as long as you get your flat, nasty, ass off my man. Now get off before I pull you off!” He said sternly.

Melissa got off of me and stood, placing very little weight on her twisted ankle. I got off the chair and went to Rosario. He looked me over and smoothed my hair.

“Are you alright, babe? Did she hurt you with her heavy ass?” He murmured.

“I’m fine. Just feeling disgusting and dirty. She was saying the grossest things, Rosario. I want to leave.” I shivered.

“I’ll let you off with a warning this time. Melissa, if you come near my boyfriend again, I’m going to beat you so badly not even your mother will recognize you. And you better not try to report him with your weak ass bullshit. This room is recorded by that camera right there.” Rosario pointed to the corner of the room. “I will make sure everyone knows what a trifling whore you really are and that’s not the kind of memory you want people to have of you, is it? Now, get the fuck out of here.”

Melissa picked up her shoes and limped out, hurriedly. I looked up into Rosario’s eyes. He looked pissed.

“I’m sorry. I was just helping her wrap her ankle and she pounced on me.” I told him.

“I don’t think you were cheating on me with the school slut. Goddess, I can smell her all over you. I felt an unease that made me need to go find you. Someone said they saw you helping her in here. I’m glad I found you instead of a counselor or someone. I don’t want you to have to come out over this.” He sighed.

“Would you really kick her ass? Should you be fighting girls?” I asked.

“Probably not, but I’d kick her ass. You looked so upset, babe. I wanted to tear her head off. That was sexual assault. Are you going to be alright to finish school? We can leave. We don’t have to stay. I want you to be comfortable. I’ll take you home and we can shower you and cuddle until you forget the feeling of that disgusting ho in your lap.” Rosario murmured, wrapping his arms around me.

I didn’t realize I was still shivering until his warmth surrounded me. I leaned my head on his shoulder. How was I going to defend him if I could be beaten by a girl? It made me promise myself to work even harder in training.

“I want to stay at school. We can go straight home afterward, but I can’t let this ruin my academic day.” I said.

“You don’t have to push yourself, babe. I’m here. Let me take care of you.” He whispered.

“You saved me once already. Let me finish the day, then you can cuddle me to your heart’s content. I’m really fine. Trust me, please?”

He kissed my cheek, then pulled back and kissed my lips. It was a tender kiss, one that told me I was cared for and loved. It almost made me start to weaken to his request. Almost.

I pulled away and caressed his cheek. “I love you, Rosario.”

“I love you, too, Sean. Let me know if you want me to beat that bitch’s ass. I’ll round up my girls and we’ll take her out to a field somewhere and make her regret ever even thinking of touching you.” He growled.

“Let’s go there’s still a little time for lunch. I’m really hungry.”

“I’ll buy you whatever you want, babe. Anything at all, you tell me and I’ll get it.” Rosario promised.

I chuckled. “Are you going to spoil me every time a girl comes on to me?”

“Abso-fucking-lutely, babe. Every damned time.” He said, pulling me from the nurse’s office.

I locked the door behind us and followed him to the cafeteria. I never wanted to experience that again. I couldn’t wait to go home, shower, and change. Rosario was right, my clothes reeked of Melissa’s nasty perfume. I never wanted to smell it again.

Are You in Heat?

## Chapter 130 - The Vampire's Servant

[Echo]

When we got home from school, everyone went into the dining room to work on any projects and assignments that were left. Those of us who had finished were helping the others. Lisa brought in snacks for us and it was a great atmosphere... almost.

Sean was jumpy. I didn’t know what was wrong. Rosario was particularly attentive to him.

On top of that, Gray seemed to be using every excuse he could think of to touch or rub against me. The strain of my body needing him warred with the resolve I had not to be with either of them until the curse was ended. At one point he bent down next to my ear.

“I can smell your arousal, angel. It’s intoxicating.” He whispered, sending a shiver through me.

“Please, Gray. Stop that. You don’t understand what you’re doing to me.” I pled quietly.

“Probably exactly what you’re doing to me. I’m so fucking hard right now, Echo. I want to be with you, be in you. I want to feel the grasp of your pleasure. I can smell how wet you are. Every time I’ve smelled you today it’s been all I can do to not drag you into an empty classroom and make you scream.” Gray murmured.

I squeezed my thighs together. The things he was saying were making my whole body tingle and tighten. Why was he doing this to me? Why didn’t I actually want him to stop?

“I wish I were between those creamy thighs right now, licking every inch of you, tasting your desire for me. I want to hear you moan my name. I want to hear your breath quicken like it does just before you cum. I wish I had known the last time I touched you would be the last time for a long time. I would have savored you more.” He sighed.

“Gray. Get off my sister!” Val snapped.

“I was just seeing if she needed anything.” Gray replied and moved away.

“Excuse me.” I said softly and left the room.

It was time to start Victor’s blanket heating and I needed a dry pair of panties. The fire that was starting to burn inside me was becoming unbearable. I needed relief.

Upstairs, I hurried to Victor’s room. Victor, Talia, and Finn were all curled up on Victor’s bed. They looked peaceful. I quickly turned on the heated blanket and rushed to my room to shower.

If Victor woke up with the curse affecting him, I didn’t want him to be angrier because I smelled like Gray. In the shower, I touched myself thinking of Gray and all the images he’d put in my head. I thought about his mouth on me, his hands, his whole body pressed into mine.

-

Relieved, clean, and dry again, I made my way back to Victor’s room. I wanted to see who he was when he woke up. My heart was in my throat as I waited.

Talia woke up first. She probably timed it so she would be up before him. She sat against the headboard and watched Victor with me.

It felt like it took hours before he started moving. Right on time, his eyes opened. When they landed on me, they softened. He smiled and reached out a hand to me.

“Princess. Good afternoon. Did you have a good day at school?” He asked.

I grinned and bounced. It was my Victor. I flung myself onto him and cuddled close.

“So it was a good day, then?” Victor chuckled.

“Better now that you’re awake.” I sighed happily.

Victor held me tightly. His arms were heavenly. I relaxed in his embrace.

“No fair. I never have a cute girl to cuddle me when I wake up.” Finn huffed.

“Because you scare them all away with your brutish manners.” Victor replied.

“Let’s get ready for our night, Finn. I’ll give you cuddles in the shower.” Talia purred.

The bed shifted, but I didn’t pull away. It was nice to be held by my Victor. I had a lot of hope, since he woke up as himself.

I felt Victor kiss my cheek, then my ear. He started making his way to my neck. I moaned and tried to push him away. He was passionate, eager, and strong.

“Victor, stop.” I breathed.

“Just a little more, my princess. You smell divine. I want to taste just a little more of you. I’ve missed the scent of you without the undercurrent of fear. I see you showered for me, just in case I didn’t wake up as myself. I appreciate that, Echo. With luck, we’ve pushed the curse off a good distance.” Victor murmured, kissing and sucking on my neck.

The heat in my body came back. I groaned as Victor nibbled at me. His fingers gripped my bottom and he kneaded my flesh enthusiastically. I could feel him hardening against me and nearly cried. I wanted him so much.

“Please.” I whispered. “Please, stop, Victor.”

He did as I said, which really was for the best. I would keep telling myself that, too. No matter how much I didn’t believe me.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t realize how much you were struggling, Echo. Your decision must be taking a toll on you. Why not rescind it for tonight? It will enable Grayson and myself to say a proper goodbye to your body and may dull the ache for all of us.” He offered.

“Or it will just make it worse. Or it could make curse Victor come back. There are too many ways it could go wrong, Victor. I’m not doing this to be mean or to hurt anyone. I want to be with you and Gray so badly it hurts. But, I just can’t risk it. I can’t risk losing either of you.” I sniffled.

“Don’t cry, princess. I didn’t mean to pressure you. I only wanted to talk to you about possible options. I wanted to make this easier on all of us.” Victor murmured, kissing the top of my head. “I won’t push you anymore. I’ll talk to Grayson. He can’t counter me the way he can counter you. Will that make you feel better, my little love?”

I nodded, even though my body screamed at me not to agree. I turned my face up and kissed Victor. It started off chaste, but I couldn’t stop myself from rubbing against him as my mouth opened to accept his tongue.

Victor pulled me away after a while. He had a hungry look in his eyes that made the heat in my belly go from flame to inferno. I tried to pull him back, all thoughts were gone and I was acting the way my body wanted to.

“Echo...? Are you in heat, princess?” Victor asked.

“I don’t know what that is. Please kiss me again, Victor.”

“You said you didn’t want to make love until the curse was over, Echo. You were managing to keep your composure and your vow until now. You’re part werewolf. You might be in heat, princess.” He explained. “That means your body wants you to have babies.”

I felt as if ice water had been dumped on me. That took the fire right out of me. I didn’t want babies right now. I couldn’t let my body force me to have them.

“Let me go, Victor. I need to figure this out.” I said.

He released me and I got off the bed. I needed to stay away from them. I needed to learn more about what being in heat means. I decided to call Amy. She was just in heat. She could tell me more about it.

-

In my room, I locked the door and pulled out my phone. I needed answers and I couldn’t think of anyone else who might have them. I needed to talk to Amy.

The phone rang and I sat on my bed, waiting for her to pick up. I was nervous. I didn’t want whatever this heat thing was if it would risk the men I loved.

“Echo? What’s up? Has the curse gotten worse? Do you need me to come help you?” Amy answered.

“Can I come to you? I need to talk and I don’t want to do it over the phone.” I asked.

“Sure. I’m in my office, it’s soundproofed.” She replied.

I hung up the phone and focused on Amy. When I got the feeling like I could connect to her, I focused on wanting to go to where she was. When I opened my eyes I was in a room I'd never seen before.

There was a little furniture, several large cabinets, and a playpen in the room. It was dim, but not dark. I could see the windows were covered in a sort of film, but I could still see through them.

Amy sat behind a large oak desk. She smiled at me and indicated the seats across from her. I sat gratefully.

“What’s going on, Echo? Last I heard, you managed to push back the curse on Victor and things were starting to pick up steam for the curse team. Did something happen?” Amy asked.

“Nothing there, really. It’s just.... I need to know what heat is and how to stop it.” I blurted out.

She looked at me curiously. “Why would you need to know that?”

I told her what was happening and what Victor said. Amy listened intently. She nodded and smiled when I finished.

“You’re not going through heat, Echo. If you were, you wouldn’t be here right now. You would have dragged Gray to your room and locked the door. You wouldn’t have let Victor pull away from you. When you’re in heat, there is nothing else that matters. Only having the man, or men in your case, you love inside of you. The fire you feel, is your own desire.” Amy explained.

“It feels so different than any time before.” I said.

“Of course it does. You never denied yourself before. You always gave into your urges. This will be hard. Don’t get me wrong. I don’t envy you your position here. You made the right decision. Being with Gray endangers him. Even if Victor is okay right now, you don’t really know when he won’t be. He may wake up curse ridden again, or it could change while he’s awake. You’re not in the wrong here. Anyone who thinks you are isn’t thinking about all of the potential complications.” She assured me.

“How do I stop feeling like this? I need to be able to think and I can’t.” I told her.

“I’m sorry, Echo. You are going to have to manually relieve yourself as often as possible. Let Victor talk to Gray. Maybe that will get him to stop trying to seduce you. At least, I imagine that’s what he was trying to do, saying all those dirty things to you. Lucien does that to me sometimes. Links me dirty suggestions to try and get me all worked up when we’re in public. Not when we’re working, thank the goddess, but other times when I should be paying attention.” Amy chuckled.

“How do you deal with that?” I asked.



“Revenge. I do the same thing to him when it’s not possible for him to do anything. Meal times are the best. I can really get going while I’m enjoying my food and all he can do is squirm. Like what you did to Victor and Gray at dinner a few weeks ago. I would suggest going to bed, locking your door, and making sure that boy can see and feel everything you want him to do to you. Then stop before he climaxes. He deserves it for trying to get you to go back on your plans. Never think a male werewolf doesn’t know what he does to his mate. If he does something that turns you on, he decided to do that thing just for that reason.” She insisted.

“Victor got really mad when I did it to him.” I said.

“This is Gray. Make sure he knows he’ll get more of the same if he doesn’t back off. It might even turn into something you both want to do. A way of getting around not being able to be together. Marius has been teaching you. Time to put all that training to the test. If you can make it feel good for both of you, then it could relieve your tension a different way.” Amy suggested.

I hadn’t thought of using my ability like that since I’d done it weeks ago. I never thought of using it for pleasure instead of torture. I licked my lips. I could do this.

“You really think it will help?” I asked.

“It couldn’t hurt. Werewolves are very touch oriented when it comes to our mates. We love kissing, cuddling, touching, and making love to them. It makes us feel whole. Maybe it will help him calm down.” She said with a shrug.

“Thank you for talking to me. Are you sure I don’t have to worry about this heat thing?”

“You’re mostly vampire, sweetie. Whatever the dhampyr version of heat is, that is what you’ll have. I imagine they have something. You said you’ve never had a period. Was there ever a time when you wanted men to touch you?” Amy asked.

Focusing on all the years before, I thought it over. I couldn’t recall a time when I ever wanted to or liked those vampires touching me. That meant I never had anything like that... right?

“What happens to a werewolf who has a heat and doesn’t have a mate?” I asked.

“Normally, we try to sequester girls and women who don’t have a mate when they go through heat. It can entice single males. The desire to be with a male is intense. There have been instances of young women getting pregnant by males who weren’t their mates. In some packs, they make them mark each other. In our pack and collective, we help support the young mother until she finds her mate. It’s up to him to accept her. Some will, but, sadly, most will not.” She explained.

“I never felt anything like that. Not until I’d marked Gray and Victor.” I replied.

“Hmm. You should probably talk to Talia. I’m not totally ignorant about vampires, but I am about dhampyrs and I don’t want to steer you wrong. She knows more than I do.” Amy said.

“I should get home. It’s almost dinner time. Gray will be at work now. He was planning to leave after I went to get Victor up. I’ll see if Victor’s talk with him will work. If it does, I’ll see if he wants to try your suggestion.” I told her.

“Good. Go on home. Tell everyone I said hi. Let me know if you need anything else. I’m always here for you. Okay, Echo?” She smiled.

“Thank you, Amy. I was so scared. There are so many things I still don’t understand.” I sighed.

“You’ll get there. I’m glad you chose to talk to me instead of freaking out. Go on. I bet they’ll start missing you soon.” Amy said, waving me off.

I stood and waved goodbye before focusing on my room. It was easier to get to someplace I’d been before than it was to get to a place I’d only been connected with on the phone. Within moments, I was back in my bedroom.

When I arrived downstairs, the smell of food hit me. I was so hungry. Using my travel ability for longer distances seemed to take a lot out of me.

Entering the dining room, I saw that my normal seat was occupied by Talia. I looked at her curiously. She pointed down the table to an empty seat between my sister and brother. When I looked back at her, I saw Victor focusing on the plate in front of him. Not looking at me.

With a sigh, I went to my seat. Harmony squeezed my hand and I smiled at her a little. Val rubbed my back. I didn’t realize I seemed so obvious. I used to be able to hide how I was feeling. I put on my best ‘happy face’. I would do my best.