

G. BAILEY

USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR



SINFUL  
*as* HELL

THE DEMON ACADEMY SERIES

*Once, a long time ago,  
a beautiful angel fell in love with a  
lost demon . . .*



*And the world forever fell with  
them.*





SINFUL  
*as* HELL

# SINFUL AS HELL

THE DEMON ACADEMY: BOOK ONE

G. BAILEY

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## DESCRIPTION



*This academy is like no other . . .*

My name is Lexi Cameron, and until three weeks ago, I thought I was human.

*It was all a lie.*

I'm a demon, and I'm signed up to attend The Demon Academy.

I soon find out it's the darkest, cruelest school around, and not many survive a full year, let alone three.

Welcome to DA, where unless you are a high demon, you can expect to be treated like trash.

*My plan?*

To be invisible and get the hell out of this academy, but it doesn't work out that way . . .

I have one angel teacher trying to get rid of me, the students of DA making sure I know what a demon can do, and I'm not going to survive Demon Academy for long.

That is until the Lucifer sons see me.

They want to break me,  
they love to play games with my heart,  
and even if I wanted to run from them . . . I can't.

I'm apparently their mate.

And just like their father's home, hell can't be escaped.

Dark Bully Academy Romance. 18+

## PROLOGUE



LEXI

TEN YEARS AGO

“Shhh, Alexandria,” my mother begs me, slamming her dusty hand onto my mouth as she holds me to her chest in the closet, so close I can hear her heart beating fast. My messy brown hair covers my face as I try not to sneeze from the dust on the toys in here. These are my toys long forgotten over the years, and now they hold some comfort. Like they can protect me somehow. Tears fall down my cheeks, dripping onto my mom’s hand as I try to stay quiet, to do as I’m told. It’s so dark in here, only a strip of light sneaks through the bottom of the door, shining on my red shoes that Dad bought me last week. *Where is Dad?*

I try to think back to today. I was drawing in my room, doing as I was told because Mom had friends over, and then suddenly Mom ran in and grabbed me, hiding us both in my cupboard by my bed.

“Shhh! It’s going to be okay,” Mom whispers to me, her voice catching. I’m not quiet enough. My tears are too loud; my breathing is too loud. I have to be quiet. All I can hear from the other side of the cupboard door is screaming and shouting, the sound of breaking glass and loud smashes. I don’t know what is out there . . . but I’m scared because my mom is scared.

My body shakes so hard as I watch the cupboard door, endlessly waiting until there is nothing but silence. I look down and gulp as I see thick red blood sliding through the gap under the door, making the light disappear as it hits my red shoes. It's not the same red; it's different.

It's dark, it's frightening, and I want to crawl away from it, but I can't move as Mom holds me so tight.

I soon realise the silence is worse than the noise, every loud heartbeat of both mine and my mom's jolts me. Suddenly the doors are pulled open, and Mom throws me off her lap, protectively standing in front of me. I'm sure her hands glow red, but when I look again, it's gone.

"Leo!" Mom shouts, throwing her arms around my dad, who is covered in black blood. He looks frantic as he runs his eyes over me and then to Mom. Why is he covered in blood? Why does he look so scary?

"We have to leave. Now!" he desperately tells us, letting Mom go. He picks me up off the ground, holding me to his chest. "Cover your eyes and count to ten. You don't need to see this." I bury my head into my dad's shoulders, closing my eyes and counting like he tells me to.

Ten.

Nine.

Eight.

Seven . . . and I open my eyes. Just once. Just to see what Dad didn't want me to see.

*I saw nothing but death.*

## CHAPTER 1

### THE CAT TALKS



“*Y*ou know my bowl is still empty as you feed these mortals,” Amethyst protests, sliding her tail around my legs as I try not to smile while I serve a middle-aged woman soup from the steaming pot in front of me.

“Thank you,” the woman gratefully says as she gets a bread roll off the side, and I nod, smiling gently at her.

“Don’t forget to check in at the clothing and bedding section before seven o’clock. They close up after seven for the night,” I explain to her, knowing she is new and it’s getting late. Then again, everyone is new these days. I run my eyes over her patchy and ripped dress, the rucksack on her back, and her hollow cheeks. She isn’t eating much, and I bet she is sleeping rough most nights.

My parents have been running the local food bank for many years, while we live in the church apartment. The food bank started as a small organisation and turned into one of the most needed organisations in the world after New York, London, and Greece were destroyed a few months ago by god knows what. Many people said it was a natural disaster; some said it was a woman who had powers. It’s hard to know what photos are photoshopped and what story is real these days.

Either way, the world changed from the peaceful one I had grown up in. The survivors didn’t have anywhere to live, let alone a way to find work and get food. Food soon became scarce as world trade came to a stop, and only recently has it been sorted out enough for us to give out food in places like this. We live just outside Edinburgh, and Scotland became the best place for everyone to run because the Scottish government decided to try

and help. Only issue is, they didn't really help like they said they would on the telly.

The government just doesn't care about them. I reckon they said they would help to look good, and that's why I am here after school every day helping my parents the best I can to run this place. We have a hundred rooms in the church, and eighty of those rooms have four-person families in them. The other twenty rooms usually change as people realise they can't get work in our town and move on to the city nearby.

"Thanks for the advice," she says, her voice thick with emotion as tears fall down her cheeks. I reach over and place my hand on her arm for just a moment. It isn't easy for people to ask for help. Pride is a tricky thing, after all. It stops you getting help most of the time.

"You should get going. You're going to be late to that date," Mum reminds me, coming to my side. I didn't even see her come out of the back room where she was helping my dad cook. Mum does the paperwork, and Dad cooks. It's a good team, even if they are in love in that sickly over-the-top way. Mum gives me a look of understanding as her deep cerulean-blue eyes drift over to the woman walking away, and back to me before she tucks her black hair behind her ears. I unclip my yellow apron that has a smattering of holes and burn marks on it and hand it to her. We share an apron—and most of our clothes—as we are the same size. Dad says we are short and sweet. I don't think sweet is a word that accurately describes me, but it certainly does describe my mum. She clips it on and stands back, placing her hands on her hips as she surveys the room. It's busier than usual today, which isn't a good thing, and I see it in her expression.

"It's just a first date. He might just want to hang out, and he might not like me," I point out.

"Sure, two seventeen-year-olds just 'hanging out.' He looks at you like a friend too," she sarcastically replies. The only person that beats my mum's level of sarcasm is me, and even then, I'm impressed by the things she comes out with.

"Your mother is lying. The boy looks at you like he wishes to eat you whole," Amethyst remarks, and I turn to glare at her, wishing she wouldn't talk to me in front of people. "I'm certain his new mission in life is to get inside your panties." I blank my expression, a thing I've gotten used to doing since Amethyst first spoke to me.

I'm pretty sure talking to your cat isn't normal and could quite possibly get me locked up if anyone found out. Mum doesn't hear Amethyst. Lucky her. I lean down, picking Amethyst up, and carry her to the back door.

"What have we talked about before?" I whisper to her, making sure no one is around before I talk.

"No talking to you when mortals are around. I know, I know, but my stomach betrayed me. I am so hungry," she grumbles, sounding like she is one meal short of death or something. I stroke her silky black fur, hearing her purr as I carry on walking.

"Your stomach always betrays you, and you are always hungry," I point out.

"It has been such a long time since food arrived in my bowl," she says, acting like she is going to pass out soon. I swear this cat is so overdramatic. Why couldn't I have picked a normal, non-talking cat? One that would just meow at me when it was hungry? No, I get the inner monologue of the craziest cat in town.

"I fed you at twelve, you little liar," I mutter, and Amethyst just looks up at me with her strange purple eyes. I should have known purple eyes weren't normal for a cat when I picked her up from the shelter.

I should have known there was a reason that no one else wanted to adopt her and five families had brought her back after a few days. But oh no, I was a sucker for a sob story. I was so, so excited to get a cat for my sixteenth birthday, and my parents have it ingrained in me to help the needy.

That is until I realised this cat could talk, and she is crazy with no boundaries.

"So long since I ate. I might die at this rate, and then what would you do without me?" she moans, and I shake my head as I push the door open.

"What *couldn't* I do without you, huh?" I mutter to her, and she only innocently purrs in response. I run up the stairs and into the apartment, kicking the door shut behind me. I place Amethyst on the floor and quickly fill her food bowl up before going to my room. I don't even get a thank you before she is eating her heart out. I try three different outfits on before giving up and looking at myself in my mirror. My skinny jeans are a little too tight, but that isn't a bad thing, and my white shirt might be a risk given the fact I regularly miss my mouth when I'm eating. I'm gonna risk it. I brush my straight brown hair and look at my pouty lips before putting on some pale nude lipstick. A little mascara later, and I think I look okay.

It's not a real date anyway.

Or at least I'm telling myself that, or I'd never leave this church.



## CHAPTER 2

### IT'S NOT A DATE



“You look very beautiful today,” John says, fixing his tie that looks like something his dad gave him to wear, as I try to smile. I’m pretty sure when I force a smile, it does not make me look attractive. I look like the Cheshire cat from *Alice In Wonderland*. I decide to focus on my date, see if I can find something to make this less awkward. *Why are dates always awkward?* The whole suit doesn’t work well for John; it’s too big, for one, and he looks seriously uncomfortable in it as he wriggles in his seat every few seconds. He is sweating a little bit, and I watch one drop of sweat slide down his forehead to his nose before he wipes it away.

“This isn’t a date; you don’t have to do the compliment thing,” I point out.

“It isn’t?” he asks with a frown marking his pretty face.

“Nope,” I say, picking my menu up. “And I will be paying for my food.”

“But I—”

“Look, you are sweet and good-looking. It’s just we aren’t compatible, and we both know that. My parents have been going on at me that I don’t have any friends and I don’t date...so here we are. Once this date is over, they will stop going on at me for at least two weeks,” I say and instantly regret as tears brim in his eyes. Mum and Dad say I’m always too harsh to everyone, but I’m sure I didn’t say anything too mean then.

*Did I?*

“I should leave,” John says, pushing up his glasses. Before I can protest, he is running out of the restaurant, and I shake my head, knowing that this was a bad idea.

“A man should never leave a woman as spectacular as you all alone,” a smooth, deep, and sexy voice purrs. “Who knows what trouble you could get into.” I look up to see the most flipping gorgeous guy I’ve ever seen. Silky white locks of hair fall over his forehead, his eyes are a perfect shade of green that I can’t even compare to anything else, his skin is tanned, and his muscular body fills out the tight white shirt and black trousers he is wearing.

*Holy all things in hell, where did he come from?*

“I think I scared him off,” I mutter. I’m surprised any words came out of my mouth at all; I feel like it’s just dried up from the holy hotness in front of me.

“A little thing like you?” he teases and tuts his tongue, and I laugh. “May I join you?”

“Sure,” I say, and he smirks as he slides into the seat opposite me, his leg brushing against mine, and I shiver from the contact. I feel like I can’t take my eyes off him. “I’ve been ever so rude. My name is Luc; what is yours?”

“Alexandria, but people close to me call me Lexi,” I reply. Luc is a sexy man name for sure.

“Alexandria.” My name is spoken so softly on his lips. I find myself liking my name for the first time in my life. “You shouldn’t shorten it; it suits you.”

“Isn’t Luc short for something?” I ask.

“Well, while you ask—” He stops talking as my phone rings in my bag.

“I’m sorry, one second,” I say, and I see him nod in the corner of my eye as I open my bag, pushing aside my keys with a giant heart-shaped keyring I won in the arcades a few months ago, and grab my phone. I frown when I see it’s my dad calling me. He never calls me. I unlock my phone and answer the call, hearing nothing but heavy breathing for a second before Dad’s hurried voice shouts down the phone.

“Come back home. Now!” The line goes dead, and I shake my head in confusion, shoving my phone back into my bag.

“I’m sorry, I need to go,” I explain.

“Is everything okay?” he asks politely.

“Yes, I’m sure it is or will be. Sorry again,” I say, climbing out my seat and looking back at Luc as I walk away. Flipping dammit, I finally meet a hot guy, and I’m leaving him behind. I run out of the restaurant and across

the empty street to the church, only to pause when I see a shadow of a man in the doorway.

“A church is a funny place for a family of demons to hide.” The gravelly voice makes me nervous as I step back, and the man steps forward into the light. He wears a hood that drops down to his stomach, with two slits for his eyes that I can’t see very well from what looks like a mask under the hood. He holds two shiny red swords in either hand, and something about him really scares me.

“Halloween isn’t for another three months,” I tell him, looking around me and seeing nothing but the empty street and the diner in the distance. If I run to the diner, maybe Luc is still there, and he can help me hide from the creeper. The cold wind blows around me as I look back at the strange, hooded man.

“Your parents have been captured for breaking the sacred demon law. Come with me now, or you will break the same law and face the same fate.”

“Where are my parents?” I ask him, stepping back once more. Something is so very wrong. Did he just say my family are demons and broke the law? What a flipping load of crap.

“Don’t do this the hard way, little demon. I do like innocent virgins just like you for my dinner, and no one knows you exist at all. It would be too easy,” he says, seeming to ponder over some crazy idea of eating me as I try not to puke.

“Sorry, you’re not my type, mate. You can go and fuck yourself if you think—” I scream as he moves in the blink of an eye and is in front of me. He moved so fast, too fast. The hilt of his sword slams into the side of my head in the next blink of an eye, and darkness takes me under without a fight at all.

## CHAPTER 3

DEMONS ARE FLIPPING REAL. WHO KNEW?



I flutter my eyes open as I come around, seeing that I'm lying on a damp, gray stone floor, the moisture making my cheek stick to the stone. It certainly smells like something died in here as more of my senses come back to me, including the headache I didn't have before. I pull myself up off the stone and look up at the thick gray bars that lock me in this cage of little else. There is a spotlight above me, shining light onto the cell, and the bars are so close together that I doubt I could get my fist through them. I move my hand to the side of my head, instantly flinching from the sore lump I find there.

That hooded weirdo didn't give me a chance. I run my other hand over my clothes, figuring out I'm in the same ones I was wearing to the date. At least there is that.

"Hello!" I shout, using the bars to pull myself up. My hello echoes down the rows and rows of cells that I can see, but no one answers. I don't know how long I pace my cell, running over and over the words of the hooded sword man just before he knocked me out. It was a cheap move, and I had no chance of defending myself.

All those self-defence classes Mum made me go to were clearly a giant waste of time and money. I rub my arms as I remember his crap about demons being real and saying I was one of them. He called me and my family demons for a matter of fact—which is crazy, like new-realms-of-crazy-that-have-never-been-found-yet crazy. It's more likely that the man is a lunatic, and now I'm locked in his basement for the rest of my life.

At least I won't have to go to school again...

“Flipping hell, I’m losing the plot,” I mutter to myself, crawling to the bars and wrapping my hands around the cold metal. I rest my forehead against it. The cold is relaxing and soothing for a second before I hear footsteps in the distance. The footsteps sound like heavy boots smacking against the stone, each step punctuated by the next until a figure stops outside my cell. It’s the same hooded man from outside the church, red eyes and all. Except for this time, he doesn’t have any swords in his hands, and he is even creepier as he just stands there.

Maybe I was right about the basement thing after all.

“No messing around, or I will be forced to cuff you. The court is waiting for your presence,” he remarks, and I realise he isn’t the same person from outside the church. This man has an American accent, almost like he is from Tennessee, I suspect. Accents aren’t my strong suit though, so he could be from any state. Handcuffs and a basement...yep, I’ve been captured for some cult. That is the only logical explanation. *I need to get the hell out of here.*

“What’s your name?” I ask him.

“I am a guard of hell. We are referred to as Hellers,” he tells me as he gets a massive key ring out of his cloak and flips through the keys, the sound of my breathing and the keys banging against each other is the only sound in this place. It’s so silent, even the sound of the dripping water is gone now. The Heller finds the right key and pushes it into the lock, clicking it open. The moment it clicks, a wave of red energy flashes across the door, and I step back.

“What was that?” I ask, my hands shaking ever so briefly because it’s easy to believe the Hellers I’ve met are wrong about magic and demons and all that. But seeing it? That is something else.

That was magic.

“It’s a demon lock,” he replies, not really answering my question because I don’t know what a demon lock is.

“Demons are real...” I whisper. For a second, all I want to do is laugh as I start to believe the madness. But then it really sinks into my head that this is all real. My parents are demons, and so am I. Why would they never tell me? It doesn’t make any sense.

“Yes. Did you think everyone was lying to you?” he asks. I suspect he is smirking at me from under that hood. “Now walk.” He points down the corridor, and I carefully walk past him, keeping his eyes locked on mine.

He is looking at me so intently that he doesn't notice as I wrap my hand around the keys and swiftly yank them out of his hand. Curling my other fist and lift it, punching him right in the chest, and his gasp followed by him collapsing means I hit the diaphragm like I wanted to. I lean down and wrap my hands around his neck, putting enough pressure to force him to pass out before I let go and stand back up.

Not bothering to look around, knowing that if someone saw me, they would have stopped me by now. I grab the Heller's feet and drag him into the cage before running outside and shutting the door, the lock automatically engaging. I run down the hallway, passing so many empty cages until I get to a corner. I peek around it, seeing it's empty, and there is a door right at the very end. I run as fast as I can down to the door, but a voice makes me stop.

"Alexandria?" my dad's voice drifts to me, and I sharply turn, seeing my dad in chains in the cell next to me. Blood pours down his face from deep cuts on his forehead, his hair is sweaty and pushed out of his eyes, and the shirt he was wearing when I last saw him is shredded, torn in dozens of places like claws ripped it apart.

"Dad!" I harshly call out, running to the cage and wrapping my hands around the bars, pushing myself as close as I can to my dad. "What the fuck have they done to you? Where is Mum?"

"In another part of the prison, away from me, but that doesn't matter right now. Listen to me carefully, Alexandria," he tells me, his voice so tired and weak that it breaks something in me to hear my dad like that.

"What do you mean, it doesn't matter where Mum is? Have you lost your mind, Dad?" I exclaim, shaking my head. "I have the keys; I will get you out, then we can find Mum," I mutter, stepping to the door and trying one of the keys in the lock. When it won't turn, I try the next one and the next one. Sweat trickles down the back of my neck the longer I stand here, the longer the keys don't work.

"Alexandria, you must listen to me," Dad desperately whispers, and I look up, seeing how much pain he is in and how much he is struggling to speak. There is no way I could carry him out of here, and I don't think he could walk. Fuck. His eyes meet mine, and a sob catches in my throat. I remove the keys and rest my head on the bars, giving up.

"I'm listening, Dad," I tell him.

“You’re a demon. It’s all true what they told you, and it’s all wrong what they told you about our family’s past,” he tells me. I struggle to reply to him; I struggle even to comprehend what he is telling me.

“Demon...why didn’t you tell me?” I ask, but I don’t even know if he hears me as his eyes are cast down to the floor.

“You don’t belong to either of them, you understand me? You are not theirs, and never let them tell you otherwise. Just survive, and it will all be okay,” he tells me, not making much sense at all. Maybe he is going delirious from the blood loss.

“I love you, Dad,” I say, just as I hear a thundering of footsteps coming from the other side of the door. I don’t look at the door, no matter how much I want to. I keep my eyes on my dad, knowing this might be the last time I see him for a long time.

“I love you too, my little girl. Remember, you don’t belong to anyone but yourself, and keep that mark on your hip a secret. No one must see it, understood?” he says, and I nod, not really understanding why a strange birthmark should be hidden, but again, he must be delirious.

“What are we, Dad? Why are they doing this to us?” I ask. “They said you ran away, but why?”

“We ran from not just the demons, but the angels too. We ran from them all, and no one can be trusted with you. I’m just sorry we somehow got caught,” he tells me, and the world-shaking revelation makes me freeze as the door slams open, and four Hellers run into the corridor. They grab me, pressing me against the bars as tears fall down my cheeks, and I try to remember every bit of my dad until they pull me away.

I’m not crying because they are hurting me or the fact my world has just been turned upside down. No, it’s because my dad is crying.

And my dad never cries.

## CHAPTER 4

### WHAT IN THE HELLER IS DEMON ACADEMY?



The Hellers practically carry me down corridor after corridor, and I keep my eyes on the gray tiles at my feet. Every third tile has a pentagram symbol in silver pressed into the tile, and sometimes the pentagram has an arrow or star in the middle of it. Counting the pentagrams helps me block out the noises of people talking around us, the hushed whispers. It blocks out the metallic scent of blood on the Hellers that are holding me. It blocks out my pure, immense fear that I'm going to lose everything I've ever known and there is going to be no way to get any of it back. I know there are many people we pass, but I don't want to look at them. I don't want to see the faces of the people that aren't going to help me. I need to make a game plan, a way to escape wherever I'm being taken and then make a second plan to get my parents out.

We suddenly come to a stop, and I look up for the first time, seeing giant double doors with a gold pentagram inlay. The wooden doors swing open, and I'm dragged into a pentagram-shaped room. *I'm sensing a theme here.* I briefly see the four people on seats in front of tall dark-wood podiums as I'm thrown onto the gray stone floor. I blink my eyes open seeing the glass ceiling above. It's stained glass, showing an angel with bright white wings, and he is flying into a pit, away from the other angels. The pit has black creatures crawling out it, and there is nothing else but fire painted inside.

"Once upon our time, an angel fell into hell. He was the first and last fallen angel—Lucifer," a man's voice echoes around the room. I sit up to find the speaker, meeting the bright green eyes of a dark-skinned man to the left of me. His black hair is complicatedly braided, and he wears a blood-



red suit. All of them wear red actually. The two women have formal dresses with high collars on, and the other man is wearing a matching suit to the one who spoke. “My name is Magnus Belcher, and I am the current leader of the demons. We understand you have had a difficult introduction into the world you belong to.”

“If by difficult you mean you beat up my dad and locked my parents and me up, then sure,” I reply, raising an eyebrow as he smiles.

“I have it on record your parents resisted arrest, and force was used for everyone’s safety,” he smoothly suggests. This one is a politician for sure.

“Safety?” I laugh, crossing my arms as he scowls at me. “Is this some sort of joke?”

“Did your parents make you aware of what you are or will be?” one of the women asks, leaning forward in her seat as her orange eyes find mine. “My name is Maureen Ward, and I did know your parents. We went to The Demon Academy together.”

“Demon Academy? What is that? A schoo—”

“She has no clue of her heritage; no wonder she reacted so badly to the Heller. What were Irene and Leo possibly thinking?” Maureen says in a hushed whisper, but I hear her, nonetheless. Magnus rubs his face before leaning back in his seat, his eyes watching me like a hawk watches a mouse it wants for dinner.

“This is very unusual. We cannot arrest this child for abandoning the cause when she does not know the cause,” Magnus replies. “It would be cold and a waste of good demon blood.”

“I feel there is only one option; she must be sent to Demon Academy until the formal trial of her parents,” Maureen suggests.

“I agree,” Magnus firmly replies, though he shares a look with Maureen that makes me nervous.

“Wait!” I shout, stepping forward, and they all look to me. I need to ask it. “Am I really a demon?”

“Yes, dear child. Your parents are full lower-class demons, but they ran away from our people after they killed five other demons. They killed higher demons who had families, who had children who needed them. The death penalty was issued to them, but it was too late as they ran. They also kept your birth a secret; we had no clue of your existence until very recently.”

“Peculiar to hide a lower-class demon. She is nothing special, so why hide her?” the other woman who hasn’t spoken yet says. Silence is the simple answer for her.

“The church hid your parents very well as churches are usually repellent of anyone with demon blood, but there are strange exceptions. We will be consulting the angels on this subject,” Magnus eventually says, speaking his thoughts out loud.

“If the angels hid them, that is war. It goes against our holy agreement,” Maureen points out. Good to know demons and angels have a holy agreement. I thought it would be called an unholy agreement but hey, what do I know?

“I doubt very much that the angels helped this family. They know it would be war, and why would they risk it for these people? They are of no importance,” Magnus replies. *Ouch.*

“They killed five very important people to us though,” Maureen whispers, but again this room echoes all sound. The other two people in the room are like statues, never moving or speaking—it’s so creepy. Maureen is so wrong. My parents would never kill anyone; they don’t do things like that.

“Leo claims to have a reason and witness, but he will only speak at the trial. I believe the angels should be invited to the trial,” Magnus suggests, ignoring me.

“Are angels real?” I ask.

“How very innocent and clueless you are. I doubt Demon Academy will be a good place for you,” Magnus finally replies to me, and I really wish he hadn’t.

“Sometimes, the innocent and clueless can surprise us. I think there is more to Alexandria Cameron than first appears,” Maureen muses.

“Perhaps you are right,” Magnus says and smiles at me. “She did knock a Heller unconscious with no training. Maybe she will survive after all.”

“Then it is settled,” Maureen replies.

“When can I see my parents?” I ask.

“At the trial. No one is to visit them until then,” Magnus replies, and each of them stands up, looking like they are going to leave.

“Wait!” I shout, stepping forward and noticing the five Hellers in the room move a step closer when I do. I have no doubt they will take me down if I move again.

“You need to attend Demon Academy and follow the rules so that you do not lose control of your demon that is in your soul. We feel sorry for you, and that is the only reason you are being excused from attacking a Heller. If you break our rules again, then there will be no more second chances,” Maureen warns me.

“Good luck at Demon Academy, Miss Alexandria Cameron. We are forever watching.”

“This way, Miss Cameron,” a Heller says, coming to my side, and I know I have no choice but to walk away. Magnus’s words haunt me as I walk away with the Hellers, knowing I can’t do anything but play along for now.

*Forever watching.* What a load of crap.

They can watch as I save my family...somehow.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE HOLY HOT STRANGER HAS WINGS



I don't see much other than busy corridors full of Hellers and random people as I walk away from the leaders of the demons. I briefly look around, catching the eyes of a normal looking guy who is carrying some books and wearing a sweater vest. But they aren't humans, and that is what freaks me out the most. These demons all stare at me like I'm a light in a dark room, so I try to keep my head down, not meeting their gazes. Four Hellers surround me, keeping pace with mine as I follow the direction of the Heller that walks in front of me, his long black cloak dragging across the tiles. I can't help but notice my outfit does not match the cloaks or smart clothing that everyone else is wearing. I definitely stand out and not in a good way. I look like a piece of trash in the middle of shining jewels, and everyone looks at me like I'm just that.

Makes things worse that they all think my parents murdered a load of people. My parents? Murderers? The couple who knit Christmas jumpers for me every year and even knitted Amethyst one? Before all this, the thought of my parents being murderers would have made me laugh. Now I just feel cold to the bone at the thought. Just imagining Am last year when I tried to get her to wear the purple jumper my mum made for her makes me smile until I realise she is alone and god knows where. Hopefully, someone will take her in, sarcastic comments and all.

Cold air blows against my cheeks as a pair of big steel doors are pulled open in front of us, and the Heller in front of me looks back at me, nodding his head forward. I reluctantly walk out of the building and down the stone steps, where a limo is waiting. I don't know where we are, but it's damn cold for August here. It was cold back home but not to the point of making

each one of my breaths look like a cloud. I glance back once more at the building behind me, where I know my parents are trapped.

I'm leaving them for the first time...and they are in danger. The guilt threatens to swallow me whole, especially when I remember how bad Dad looked and how I didn't even get to see Mum. The leaders said force had to be used to take them...that means my mum might be hurt. I know I have to leave and do as I'm told, and then I can make some kind of plan to get my parents and escape this Demon Academy they are sending me to. I just have to learn how to use my supposed powers, and then surely that will help me plan my escape. My hands shake as the Heller gets to the bottom of the stairs first and opens the limo door for me.

"Will they kill my parents?" I ask the Heller, knowing I have no right to ask him, and he or she has no reason to answer me.

"Death is a blessing for your parents. By the devil, we all pray that is all they will receive," he coldly tells me. *I wish I hadn't asked now.*

"What?" I ask, looking back at the giant stone building. "I have to speak to Magnus and whatever that woman was called again. I have to—" I'm stopped as the Heller grabs my wrist, pulling me closer to him.

"Trust me; you need to get into the limo now. They are forever watching you, and you cannot do anything to help your parents," he warns me, almost kindly this time. "Their patience with you will wear thin if you do not do as you are told."

"Would you get in the limo if you were in my shoes?" I ask him, wishing I could see his eyes under the slits of his hood.

"Yes, without question. I would know that my death will not help my parents," he replies to me, letting my arm go.

"What's your name?" I ask, feeling like I need to know it.

"Claus," he tells me and shoves me into the limo before I can reply. The door slams shut behind me, and the limo instantly starts moving as I scramble to sit up on the leather seat, enjoying the warmth of the inside. The limo is basic inside, nothing but three leather seats and cream carpet. Though there is a dodgy pink stain near the door, making me wonder if that was blood and they didn't clean it very well. I suck in a deep breath, smelling nothing but bleach and leather, and knowing I need fresh air because this is all too much. I'm seriously going to puke. I try both tinted windows, but they don't open. I crawl to the front, knocking on the closed blacked-out window.

“I need fresh air, please. I’m going to puke otherwise,” I shout through the screen, and I bang my hands on it a few times. There is silence instead of a reply, and tears prick the corner of my eyes as I sink to my knees, sucking in deep breaths. I feel like I can’t breathe, and the limo slowly starts to feel like it’s the worst place in the world, just as one of the windows starts sliding down, and fresh air slams against my cheeks. I crawl to the window and lean my head against the side.

“It’s all going to be okay,” I keep telling myself the same thing over and over until I can say the words without tears and my voice breaking down. I need to get it together; I’m not falling apart now. I can save that for later. Right now, I need to focus on where the hell this Demon Academy is. I finally take a second to look up and see the castle we are driving toward. *Of course it’s a damn castle.*

The castle looks like something from the old *Dracula* movie Dad used to watch all the time, and it sits on the edge of a big cliff. The cliff downright terrifies me as I move my eyes to the castle, seeing the seven spiralling towers, and each of the towers has a pentagram symbol at the top of the tower, filled with red stained glass. The sun shines through the clouds every so often, shining red light all over the castle and the grounds surrounding it. There doesn’t seem to be any other buildings, and there is nothing but high wire fencing walls making a circle around the academy until it hits the cliff. I guess they aren’t concerned with students running away by jumping off the cliff. It’s too high for anyone to survive anyway, and the sound of the crashing waves means the landing wouldn’t be good either.

*So this is The Demon Academy.* The limo speeds down the one road, which has watchtowers strategically placed alongside it, manned by Hellers. It takes about ten minutes before we get to the gate, and a Heller speaks with the driver before walking off, waving his hand in the air for a signal to open the gates. I know from the second we drive through the gate, there is no going back to my old life. There is no future unless it’s a future as a demon.

I’m a flipping demon...and I lived in a church. The Heller that caught me was right; it was a funny place for a family of demons to hide. I would laugh, but then again, that would be what crazy people do—laugh at their own misfortune and all that. Maybe if I were crazier, then I wouldn’t be in this giant ball of crap life I’m currently finding myself in.

The limo comes to a stop right outside the castle where a little black sign has a logo with The Demon Academy written on it. The logo has two crowns on either side and a pentagram under the writing in a badge symbol. There are little swirly things going off it all over the place, and I just close my eyes before pushing the door open. The door slams into something hard enough to bounce, and sounds of metal twisting fill my ears. *What the hell?* I step up out of the limo to meet the most vibrant green eyes I've ever seen. They look like the forest, and I could damn well get lost in them. I shake my head, losing eye contact with the stranger to see he has silky black hair that is short at the sides and the back from this angle, and much more on the top, falling onto his forehead. He has a tanned, golden glow to his skin, and that is all I notice because then he spreads his black, soft-looking, glossy wings out.

*Wings.*

"The holy hot stranger has wings," I mutter, my cheeks burning red when I realise I just said that out loud, and the hot stranger just flipping well heard me. He does not look amused though. In fact, he seems like he wants nothing more than to rip my head off. Thankfully, he rips the door off the car instead. The metal breaking and crunching hurts my ears as I think about hiding in the limo. I gulp before jumping out of my skin as he throws the broken door of the limo onto the ground, where it slides and smacks into the stone steps leading up to the academy.

"Next time, watch what you are doing for heaven's sake," he growls, his foreign accent and gravelly tone making it really hard to be scared of him. One part of me is definitely not scared of him. Flipping hell, there is something wrong with me.

"Is that an angel thing?" I ask, clearing my throat. *Real smooth, Lexi.*

"Is what an angel thing?" he growls. Okay, I'm annoying him more. Not what I was going for, but I might as well finish my question.

"Ripping car doors off in anger?" I ask.

"What is your name?" he enquires, taking two steps closer, and I arch my neck to meet his eyes. They don't look like the forest anymore, not unless that forest was on fire—a green burning fire that wants to destroy absolutely everything in its path.

"Lexi," I finally find the guts to say.

"Stop being a fucking baby, Lexi, and walk into the academy. If a door being ripped off and thrown scares you, then you won't survive what is in

there,” he barks at me. Okay, thought we had a moment where he might not be scary—I was wrong.

“Then why should I walk in?” I ask him. He already doesn’t like me; how could I make this worse?

“Because I want to see you fail, *baby*,” he replies, a smooth smirk lifting his lips from the frown that was there. I don’t have a comeback for the utter asshole, so I lift my middle finger at him as I walk around the broken limo door and up the steps. I only look back once to see my strange angel following me into my new school.

I guess the academy can’t be worse than he is.



## CHAPTER 6

### THEY KIDNAPPED THE CAT TOO



After walking up two dozen wide stone steps to the academy, I get to three open doors, each to a separate corridor, and each with a lot of students inside who all stop and stare when they notice me. They all wear matching uniforms of white shirts with red logos, and either red and black plaid skirts or black trousers. It's like they have never seen a new person before, because they all watch me.

I've never liked being the centre of attention, and it only makes me itchy to hide somewhere. It reminds me of the time I thought I was a good singer and signed up for the talent contest at school. Five seconds into singing Beyoncé in front of my class, I realised they were all laughing and I really needed to stop singing. My ass never ran so fast out of school like I did that day. I remind myself that I'm not nine years old anymore, and I'm old enough to handle myself in this school, even if they all stare. I guess they see me as the runaway daughter of murderers.

The hallways of the academy are just door after door, with yellow walls and white-tiled floors. There are lockers dotted around, but they look old and rusted, and I'm betting they are for decoration more than actual use. I also spot several people carrying around bags full of books, suggesting they aren't using the lockers between classes.

"Ah, you found her, Mr. Morganach!" A middle-aged man wearing a black cloak over a white shirt and black trousers runs over to us, though he is speaking to the angel who stops at my side. The man has thick brown hair, small glasses that perch on his long nose, and his brown eyes watch me like I'm fascinating. "My name is Mr. Bisgaard, and I am the headmaster of The Demon Academy. You must be Miss Alexandria

Cameron. Correct?” I nod. I don’t see who else I could be. There isn’t exactly a row of new students lining up at the door.

“What should I do with the door?” someone asks, and we all look back to see three Hellers picking up the car door between them at the bottom of the steps, and another Heller closer to us who spoke.

“Miss Cameron hit me with a car door as her way of saying hello,” Mr. Morganach smoothly explains. What a tattletale. It was just an accident.

“Ah, well, perhaps you should help them with that,” Mr. Bisgaard says, looking rather flustered before he seems to take a deep breath and calm himself down. “Miss Cameron, this way.”

I look back at the gates in the distance, seeing how high and imposing they are. There is no escaping, but hell, I want to try somehow.

“Don’t run now, baby. It would be too disappointing,” Mr. Morganach whispers to me, and I sharply turn my eyes to his, only to be frozen again by the beauty of them. He really has some dark, fucked-up humour, but he also has a really pretty face. What the hell is an angel doing at Demon Academy in the first place? Mr. Morganach walks down the steps, and I turn back to see Mr. Bisgaard walking into the middle corridor, never looking back to see if I’m following. I jog to catch up with him, passing many whispering students gathered together, many of who don’t hide the fact they are staring at me. I jog quicker to catch up with Mr. Bisgaard.

“Welcome to Demon Academy, Miss Cameron. We are the people of the devil, and we are cloaked in sin. That is the motto of the academy, and it would be best if you remember it. Lucifer is our King in Hell, though you may know him by other names like the first fallen, the devil, Satan, and the one true unholy King of Hell among others. He prefers to be called Lucifer.”

“This is crazy,” I mutter.

“Now, you’ve already met one of your teachers, Mr. Morganach, but there are five others you can count on to help and guide you through your years at DA,” Mr. Bisgaard tells me. So mister stranger angel is a teacher. Flipping fantastic, I’m sure my lessons with him are going to be fun. Mr. Bisgaard suddenly turns into an open room where there is little more than a desk, two chairs on either side of it, and a filing cabinet in the corner. The walls are a horrid orange colour, and the white tiles just make the orange walls all the brighter. An out of place posh chandelier hangs from the ceiling, its dozens of lights reflecting off the small crystals hanging from it.

“Do shut the door, Miss Cameron, unless you wish for an audience. I’m afraid DA can get a little boring after a while, and the students become nosy about anything new.”

“Sure,” I say, shutting the door where there are indeed a lot of students hanging around.

“Do get me out of this cage. I am not one of those types of cats that are into bars and other kinky things,” Amethyst says, her voice drifting to me. I shoot my head around the room until Mr. Bisgaard lifts Amethyst in a cat carrier onto the desk.

“I believe this cat belongs to you, and she might be your familiar. She was rescued from the church your family was found in,” he tells me, and some part of me takes a deep breath of relief. Am is family, and I’m glad to have her with me, considering I’ve lost everything else.

“Rescued? They dared to pick me up, and then they locked me up in here. I would call it kidnapping,” Amethyst protests.

“She is mine, thank you. I can keep her here?” I ask. If he says no, I’m going to keep her anyway.

“Yes, you may, although it is strange for a demon as young as you to have a familiar. A familiar is a guide to help advise you in your darkest times. Most demons find their familiars around the age of twenty-five to thirty—if ever—and then only when they are working and their demon is at full strength,” he explains to me. “Familiars are more commonly found in hell, which there is no way you have gone to yet. Your situation just becomes more peculiar to us all.”

“Their demon? I’m not sure what you mean?” I ask because processing everything else he just said is going to take some time. Amethyst came from hell. Well, I shouldn’t be surprised. She is a sarcastic little madam at times.

“We are demons, born into human bodies. Between the ages of seventeen and nineteen, our demon surfaces, and it either kills us or we find a way to balance our shared body. Demons need violence, death, or suffering to stay alive, and it is our way of life. Your parents’ demons must have fed off the suffering of the homeless that came to the food bank, at least that is what everyone is saying,” he remarks and hands me an envelope.

“I find it hard to process all this.”

“I could only imagine. Don’t worry; your demon will not appear until you get close to the age of eighteen,” he says.

“Something to look forward to,” I sarcastically say, but he doesn’t pick up on it as he smiles widely.

“Your key to your room is in there and the number. At the end of this corridor are the students’ rooms. Yours is on the first floor, right at the end. Just walk straight past the statue and down the corridor.”

“Thanks,” I mutter, gripping the envelope tightly. “Do we have powers?” If we do, there is a better chance I can learn them and save my parents. And perhaps myself.

“Our demons do, and it is their choice to share them with us. I’m afraid around sixty percent of the demon population never find a balance with their demon and end up dead,” he remarks.

“Great odds there,” I reply with a frown. He links his hands together, leaning on the desk and watching me closely.

“It is the way of the demons, the way of your people. Only the strong shall live in immortal sin forever,” he remarks, sounding like he is reciting some poetry.

“We are immortal?” I ask, my voice so low it’s like a ghost.

“Only in hell. If we stay on Earth, then we cannot be immortal for long. Many of our people spend years in hell and some years here,” he explains to me.

“If death is normal for our kind, why are my parents on trial for killing?” I ask.

“Your parents didn’t just kill the higher demons, they took their souls, which means Lucifer never got their souls. We are unsure how they did such a thing, considering it is an angel power and there was no angel presence sensed in the area. Everyone is as interested in your parents’ trial as you are. What they did...it was unholy, and Lucifer himself wants answers,” he explains to me, and it only makes me mad. I clench my fists, sucking in a deep breath before I reply.

“They aren’t killers,” I bite out. His frown only deepens.

“I knew them both—your father especially well. I never thought they were...but they ran away with no answer. They resisted arrest when found, and they hid you from your own people. You are a demon with no knowledge of your heritage or your own world. I never thought any parents could be that cruel to their child,” he remarks. “I feel sorrow for you.”

“My upbringing wasn’t cruel. I love my parents,” I practically growl at him.

“It was cruel to hide who you are from you. You are painfully unaware of your world, and I hope it does not cost you your life,” he remarks, and I struggle not to argue with him, because honestly, he is right. Dammit.

“I always knew there was something bad about you. You always liked to starve me; it’s no surprise to me that you are a demon,” Amethyst declares, and I roll my eyes at her. She can be such a crazy cat at times, but the humour helps me relax a little tiny bit.

I’m not evil; I’m not a monster. A memory flickers into my mind for just a second...a time when a stranger told me I was a monster. I was young, and Dad soon took me away from the house we had come to. Mum stayed in the car, tears falling down her cheeks while I held her hand as Dad drove us away. I remember him telling her that everyone was wrong about me.

That I wasn’t a monster...but what if everyone was right and my parents were just trying to protect me? They are demons too, but I never saw anything demonic or unusual. The only unusual thing in our life was my talking cat...and they couldn’t hear her.

It seems no one but I can.

“Now, your wolf slave has been assigned ahead of your arrival and should be getting your room ready. You will find your schedule in there, and if you skip a class, the punishment is not nice. Do attend all classes and see the infirmary if you are too ill to go,” he explains to me.

“I don’t get sick. Ever,” I mutter.

“Your demon can protect you from everything,” he replies. “A lack of illness is a good suggestion your demon likes you.”

“Wait, did you say wolf slave? What the hell is that?” I suddenly remember what he said, snapping out of my own thoughts.

“I forget how little you know. Fine, one more explanation, because this is tiresome and I have things to do. As well as demons and angels, there are creatures called wolf shifters. They look as human as we do, but they are anything but. The wolf shifters owe a debt to our King of Hell, Lucifer. In payment of the debt, any bastard-born wolf is given to the demon families as slaves at the age of seventeen,” he explains. “The wolves do not want war, and this agreement has worked for everyone for many years. They don’t need the bastards either way. They are born in sin and therefore belong to us.”

“Wolf shifters are real? You are giving me a slave? Are you insane? I don’t want a slave!” I say and shake my head. “No way in hell is that happening. I don’t care what crazy agreement you all have.”

“You need a slave to replace your mother. Who else is going to pick up your clothes and clean the mess you make? I’m a cat, I can’t do it,” Amethyst adds in.

“Like you would anyway, lazy mare,” I whisper to her.

“Pardon?” Mr. Bisgaard says just as the door opens and Mr. Morganach walks in, saving me from responding. “Don’t bother knocking as per usual, Mr. Morganach.”

“You asked me to come here; what do you want?” he sharply asks.

“As you are so far behind, Miss Cameron, Mr. Morganach will give you extra lessons to help your transition. Especially in the art of self-defence so that you stand a chance.”

“Yeah, no,” he smoothly replies, so quickly that the last of Mr. Bisgaard’s sentence barely left his lips before he was answered. “She will be killed—or worse—in less than a few weeks. I prefer to drop her off the side of the cliff, save us all—”

“Mr. Morganach, do remember you are a teacher here, and you swore to obey me. If you want to go right back to—”

“Fine,” he snaps, the fury in his voice directed straight at me. He walks to the door, pulling it open hard enough that the door smacks into the wall and causes a crack in the orange paint. I turn to see him looking at me, his hand resting on the doorknob, his wings almost fluttering behind him. He might be an asshole and my teacher, but I sure can admire his deadly beauty. “Be at my office at six o’clock every morning. If you are late, I will fucking kill you.” He storms out the room, leaving the door open, so the students in the corridor look in as they walk past. I duck my head as I turn back to the headmaster.

“He is joking, right?” I ask with a laugh. I have to laugh, or I would be freaking out. I can’t fight anyone, let alone mister tall, dark, and downright scary angel teacher.

“Dark angels have a temper, and Mr. Morganach is no exception to that rule. It would be best if you turn up on time,” he replies to me like nothing just happened.

“So teachers can kill students here? What kind of academy is this?” I exclaim.

“We serve the devil; what did you expect? Kittens and pink hearts on your uniform?” he asks, and I grip my envelope tighter.

“No, but—”

“Try to stay alive, Miss Cameron. It would be a shame if you die before your parents’ trial. I believe they need you as a witness,” he states.

“But—” The word leaves my lips as my headmaster bursts into green flames and disappears in front of my eyes, leaving me alone in the room.

So it’s decided, school is finally going to kill me.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE WELCOMING COMMITTEE SUCKS



“I can walk. I do not need to be carried in this thing,” Amethyst declares, sounding less than impressed as I pick up her cat carrier and carry her to the door.

“You can stay in there until we get to our new room. In case you haven’t noticed, we aren’t safe here, and I want to stay under the radar as best I can,” I explain to her, keeping my voice quiet.

“You’ve already pissed off mister sexy angel. You should ask him on a date; he would be much better for me to stare at until he feeds me,” she suggests, sounding like she is trying to be helpful.

“I’m not answering that; he is my teacher,” I mutter to her, lowering the cage and walking to the door as a girl walks into the room, stopping right in front of me.

“He can teach me anytime he wants. I’m going to stalk him into saving me from you, and I can love him forever,” Amethyst says.

“Good luck with that. I think he might eat you instead,” I reply, and she soon decides to be quiet. Hell, it’s a miracle.

“You’re Alexandria Cameron? Right? Who were you talking to?” the new girl asks, placing her hands on her hips. Whoever she is, she is beautiful. She has long dirty blonde hair, bright blue eyes, and a nose piercing. She is wearing a white shirt with the DA logo on it and a red and black short skirt. She has black heels on that she looks like she can effortlessly walk in. I hope heels aren’t part of the uniform; otherwise, I’m going to be falling over all the time.

“No one. Who are you?” I ask.



“Ah, sorry. I’m Maggie Menzora, and I thought you might like a guide to your room,” she says, offering me a hand to shake, but my hands are both full. She suddenly seems to spot the cat carrier, and she leans down. “Aww, your cat is beautiful.”

“Maggie has good taste, I already like her,” Amethyst states. “Maybe I should leave you and see if Maggie will feed me before I die of starvation.”

“Thanks,” I say, feeling awkward as I grip the envelope harder in my other hand.

“Come on, let’s go,” Maggie says, nodding her head at the door before turning around and walking out. I follow her out into the now empty corridor.

“Where did everyone go?” I ask as we walk down the corridor, her heels clicking against the tile and my shoes making awkward squishy noises every step.

“Class started, don’t worry, I think you start tomorrow. I can’t see how they would expect you to start today,” she says. “It’s only been a few months since school started, and the classes are pretty random because our teachers go back and forth to hell all the time.”

“Cool,” is all I can find to say to her. This is all way too much for anyone to handle. It’s a real surprise to me that I’m not rocking back and forth in the corner of a room somewhere.

“I’m sorry about your parents, that must have been hard to have happen,” Maggie says, and I eye her for a second, wondering if I could trust her. “I can’t imagine how you are coping with all this new information and losing your parents in one day. You must be tired.”

“Very,” I answer her, deciding to keep my mouth shut until I can figure out if I can trust anyone else in this academy, even if miss chatty is nice. We get to the end of the corridor, where an imposing statue is in the middle of a circular room. The circular room has three lifts and two corridors between the lifts. I look up to see there are three floors with dozens of white doors, and the top of the room is glass.

“Our great king, Lucifer,” Maggie says, looking up at the statue. The white stone is carved to make a kneeling angel, big wings hovering at his side and his head bowed down so you can’t see his face.

“Why is he bowing?” I ask.

“All those who bow before the light are blessed with wings. When angels fall into hell, they never bow again,” she tells me. “And they don’t

have their wings anymore.”

“Lucifer fell from heaven, right?” I ask.

“More or less, yes. He is banished from both Earth and heaven because of his choice. There is no way to meet Lucifer unless you go to hell, which we can’t do until we are balanced with our inner demon,” she explains to me. “I’m sure there are ways around his banishment, but so far, he has stayed in hell. No tricks at all. I can’t wait to meet him one day.”

“Why would you want to meet him? He sounds evil as, well, hell,” I reply, watching her closely. This is clearly a cult just like I thought but more messed up than I could have ever thought.

“He is our king, our mighty leader, and very important to our future and current existence. Every day, angels threaten us, and the other supernaturals only fall in line because they fear Lucifer. Without him, we all would be killed,” she explains to me. “Earth would fall in the crossfire, heaven would be destroyed, and everyone’s souls would be lost.” That doesn’t sound morbid at all.

“Did he create us?” I ask her.

“He opened the first door between hell and Earth, allowing our demon ancestors to mate with humans and breed the way for our existence,” she explains.

“So he made an army once he fell into hell?” I ask.

“A loyal army, yes,” she says. “Anyway, let’s go. I bet you can’t wait to see your room.”

“Sure,” I say, walking toward the corridor straight ahead. I see the room right at the end, the white door which I figure is mine thanks to Mr. Bisgaard’s directions. I gasp as someone slams into my side, and I bounce into the wall, coughing from the shock. The cat carrier slips out of my hand, rolling across the floor as Amethyst meows loudly. A girl steps in front of me, wrapping her hands around my throat before I can react, and puts our faces super close together so I can see her dark brown, muddy coloured eyes. I pull my gaze to Maggie, who only smiles, and I now know she was playing me. Seems I’ve met the DA bitches earlier than expected.

“What the fuck do you bitches want?” I ask, grabbing her hands and trying to pull them off me, but she is super strong. She keeps one hand on my neck, holding me in place and uses her other hand to smack me hard across the cheek, snapping my head to the side as I taste blood in my

mouth. I spit the blood at her, and she squeals, letting go as she wipes her face.

“You are an animal! Just like your murderous parents!” she screams at me, her voice echoing around us.

“What was the point in playing friends, Maggie?” I ask her. “And who the fuck are you? Don’t think it will be that easy to mess with me, whoever you are!” I ask the girl as I wipe more blood away from my cut lip.

“I’m Letitia Lale, and your parents killed my mum and dad. They killed Maggie’s mum, dad, and aunt before escaping and running away with you. Now we can’t punish them, but we can sure as fuck make your life a misery,” she hisses at me.

“Watch your back, Alexandria,” Maggie warns, tears brimming in her eyes. She doesn’t want to do this, I can see it.

“My parents wouldn’t have done that! They aren’t murderers!” I shout at them as they walk away. Maggie looks back at me for a second, that is until Letitia hooks her arm in hers and makes her look away. Great, I’ve made three enemies at this school. I pick myself up off the floor and walk to the cat carrier, lifting it and meeting Amethyst’s eyes.

“I’ve decided I don’t like Maggie after all. She seems like a backstabbing bitch. I mean, you’re a bitch but the good kind, so I’m sticking with you,” she says, making me smile which only hurts my lip.

“You must feel bad for me if you’re being nice, Amethyst,” I say, feeling how sore my neck is. “Well kind of nice.”

“My nice behaviour lasts all of ten minutes. You might as well make the most of it,” she tells me as I walk to the door at the end, one that is a little ways away from any others. I open the envelope and find a red key card, much like they use at hotels.

In my mind, this is a hotel, it is not my home. I slide the key card into the gap for it, and it beeps before I push the door open and walk in. The walls are all exposed brick, with big timbers that go across the ceiling on either side. The back of the room is three windows that show views over the stormy sea, and there is a brown leather couch in front of it. Two other leather chairs in the same colour are around a wooden coffee table. There is a wall with just kitchen cupboards, a fridge freezer, and a dishwasher by the looks of it. I walk further in and place the cat carrier on the ground before opening it for Amethyst to have a look around. She instantly jumps onto the sofa before stretching out and rolling on her back.

“I agree with the setting. Now, where is the food bowl?” Amethyst asks. I shake my head at her and walk to the gap I see behind the wall, only to freeze when someone comes out of one of the rooms. The girl is about my age with deeply tanned skin, locks of curly brown hair that are pulled up into a tight bun, though some curls have escaped. She has pretty brown eyes, and I feel more confused as she sinks to her knees, bowing her head.

“I am sorry. I should have been waiting by the door for you. My name is Serafin, and I am your slave to command,” she says, though her voice wavers with fear a little bit.

“No,” I say, offering her a hand to help her up, which she looks at in confusion. “Please, and I mean please do not refer to yourself as anything but my friend.”

“I-I...” she mumbles, taking my hand and standing up. She folds her hands behind her back, and I frown at the bizarre, deep green, plain dress she is wearing.

“My name is Lexi. Nice to meet you, Serafin. Can I call you Sera?” I ask her.

“Of course,” she says, still very nervous, and her expression changes to concern. “Are you hurt? How did that happen?” she mumbles, hurrying around me. “I will get an ice pack out, or that is going to swell and bruise.”

I move and sit on the sofa, next to Amethyst, who is snoring already. She has made herself at home at least. I pull my legs onto the sofa and wrap my arms around them as Sera comes back and hands me an ice pack. She stands awkwardly at the side of the sofa, looking down at the ground as I hold the ice pack on my cheek.

“Do you want to sit down?” I ask.

“Are you sure? It is forbidden for us to use anything that belongs to our demon host,” she explains to me. What stupid rules.

“Look, I’m not sure what everyone else here is like, but I don’t want us to be awkward around each other or for you to think you can’t sit with me. I would love a friend I could trust...because I’ve actually never had a real friend, and I’ve just lost everything,” I say, surprising myself with how strong I sound.

“I’ve lost my home and my family too. I was taken to come here,” she carefully replies to me, her voice and look in her eyes still guarded in fear.

“Same,” I say, and we both just stare at each for a second, and I feel like I might have just found a really good friend. She carefully sits on one of the

chairs and moves her eyes to Amethyst.

“I’ve never seen a cat before. What is her name?”

“Amethyst, and she is not like any other cat I’ve ever known. You can become her best friend by simply feeding her,” I explain to Sera.

“I will go to the kitchens and make sure we have cat food prepared as well as your meals. Is there anything you particularly like to eat?” she asks me.

“I can make my own food—” I start to say, but she cuts me off.

“If I don’t make your food, do your washing, and keep this place tidy, then I will be reported for misconduct, and they will kill me. I’m nothing but a bastard-born wolf to my pack and a slave to your people. I need you to let me do things...plus, what else am I meant to do? I will be terribly bored otherwise,” she explains to me. “I’ve been trained my whole life for this, and I am happy to do it.”

“I’m sorry this is your life,” I whisper to her, almost wanting to reach out and comfort her.

“Wolves used to kill their bastard children before the agreement between the demons and wolves to stop war. In some ways, this is much better than death,” she muses.

“Where do you sleep?” I ask, wanting to change the subject. New information about things I don’t understand is not what I need today. A comfy bed—that sounds perfect.

“I have a room next door to yours. Want to see the bedrooms? You must be tired,” she says, and I nod, standing up off the sofa and stroking Amethyst as I pass her. Sera opens the first door in the corridor, showing me a massive bedroom with a huge king-sized bed, two big wardrobes, and a fluffy red rug near the fake fireplace on the wall, where a big television hangs above it. I follow her in, and she opens the wardrobe for me.

“There is all your uniforms and shoes. The other wardrobe has a selection of clothes for casual and weekend wear. There is a new iPad, laptop, and phone in here, but the phone doesn’t have the best signal. We are on an island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, but the Wi-Fi is good,” she tells me. “Do you want me to leave you alone?”

“No, show me your room and the bathroom please,” I say, and she shakily nods. We go out of my bedroom, and she opens the door opposite, which is a bathroom the size of the bedroom we were just in. It has a massive porcelain tub that is a circle shape with many jets by the looks of it.

There are two toilets, a glass shower, and a pile of towels in an open cabinet by the double sink.

“This is way too much. Like I shared a tiny bathroom a quarter of the size of this one with my parents and one cat,” I explain.

“Your cat uses the bathroom?” she asks with a smile. It’s the first time I’ve seen her smile, and it makes her prettier.

“Yep, she thinks litter trays are beneath her, and she happily uses the toilet,” I explain, suddenly realising how weird that must sound.

“How do you know she thinks that?” Sera asks.

“Just a guess,” I shrug, and she smiles at me like I’m strange. I really, really sound strange right now. We leave the bathroom and go to the room next door to mine. Sera opens the door—which doesn’t open all the way—and flicks on the light for the tiny closet of a bedroom. There is a single bed, plain bed sheets that have seen better days, and a cardboard box with copies of the green dresses Sera is wearing.

“This is your room?” I ask, walking out of it as I hear her say yes very quietly. I go to the last door on the row and open it up, flicking the light on and seeing a room that is a mimic to the one I have been given. I turn back to Sera, who looks down at the ground.

“This is your guest room, for anyone you wish to have sleep over,” she tells me.

“No, this is your room,” I demand.

“I can’t—” she starts to say.

“I won’t ever command you do anything except for this one time, Sera. Please sleep in this room,” I tell her, and she lifts her head, her cheeks a little redder than they were before.

“What if someone finds out?” she asks.

“Then I will tell them I wanted your room for my own, so I moved you out into here. What could they possibly say about that?” I say, and she smiles at me, a big happy smile, before she chuckles. I chuckle too, and it feels good to laugh after the crappy day I’ve had. “I’m going to have a shower and get into bed. See you tomorrow, Sera.”

“Thank you, Lexi,” she tells me, placing her hand on my arm for a second. The brief contact is something I really didn’t know I needed. “You are going to be okay here. They told me you lived a human life with no knowledge, but see that as a blessing and always know you can ask me anything you want.”

“I can’t see the fact my parents lied to me my entire life as a blessing. They might as well have thrown me in the middle of the sea without any knowledge of how to swim,” I reply. “I love them, but I never thought they would do anything that would leave me defenceless and clueless.”

“My father regularly told me he loved me...but then never looked back the day I was taken to come here,” she replies.

“And you still love him, right? You’d still jump in front of a bullet for him?” I ask with a humourless laugh. “I feel the same way. I guess we both need to figure out everything on our own. At least we have each other, huh?”

“We do, Lexi,” she says, and we both smile at each other before I turn and walk to the bathroom. I shut the door behind me and lock the door. I switch the shower on just seconds before I fall to my knees and sit back, bursting into tears.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE TEACHERS ARE CRAZY



“Thank you for showing me the way, Sera,” I say outside a door that says Mr. Morganach on the outside of it on a little metal sign. There are several dents in the door that make me think someone—most likely Mr. Morganach himself—has kicked it several times.

“Wait, are vampires real? Fairies? Dragons?” I ask Sera, suddenly wondering about the world I really have no clue about. The idea of training with an angel makes me rethink everything I’ve ever known. I’ve always loved reading young adult books about everything from vampires to talking dragons; now I wonder if any of them are actually real. The world I’ve been living in is actually nothing like I expected it to be.

“Dragons are apparently real in hell. Vampires are nearly extinct because they are the natural enemy of wolves, and my race has hunted them into hiding. Fairies are just stories, but in this world, who actually knows?” she muses. “There are many magical things hiding in this world, and no one knows where to look. That’s what makes it magic.”

“You’re pretty smart, Sera,” I reply with a grin, and she blushes.

“I will wait here with your change of clothes for you to come back,” she says as I lift my hand to knock. “Good luck.”

“Pray for me, more like,” I say as the door is pulled open, and my biggest fan opens the door, looking annoyed that I turned up at all.

“Don’t pray for her. Doesn’t she know an angel’s blessing is considered terribly unlucky?” Mr. Morganach says to Sera, who splutters a few times before she replies to him.

“I—”



“Never mind,” Mr. Morganach rudely interrupts her before she can say anything at all, and I glare at him.

“That was rude,” I tell him, and he crosses his arms, running his eyes from my legging-clad legs up to my tight purple top up to my hair pulled tightly into a high ponytail. He doesn’t seem to like what he sees. I don’t know why I care that he does.

“You are fifteen minutes early,” he tells me.

“Being early isn’t rude the last time I checked,” I reply, keeping my head up. His hand shoots out, and I back up a step, only to realise he wanted to inspect my bruised cheek and cut lip as his eyes are focused on it. Or I have a bug on my face, which I doubt.

“Who did that?” he angrily asks. I’m getting whiplash from this guy. One moment he is annoyed at my existence, the next he doesn’t want me hurt.

“It’s nothing,” I reply.

“It is, and you need to get them back before they believe you are nothing but a baby and they carry on that shit,” he warns me.

“You’re a teacher; aren’t you meant to tell me you’ll speak to them if I tell you who they are?” I ask. “Not suggest more violence?”

“I’m not your babysitter, and what can I say? I’m not a good fucking teacher,” he says, pulling the door shut behind him and storming off down the corridor.

“I think you better run after him,” Sera suggests, and I widen my eyes before turning around and running after Mr. Morganach as he heads outside. He walks straight down the steps before stopping and looking back at me as I walk down the dozens of steps, and I’m out of breath when I get to his side.

“That tires you out...seriously?” he sourly asks.

“Sorry, I missed step class as a kid,” I reply, which only seems to infuriate him more.

“We have a two-mile run, and if you don’t keep up, I won’t be impressed,” he warns me.

“Why do you hate me so fucking much?” I ask.

“Because you are going to die from your inexperience and naive nature. If I don’t kill you, you are bound to piss someone else off, and they will,” he remarks. “As for why I care, I really don’t know, and it is pissing me off just as much.”

“Then help me learn how not to be inexperienced and naive,” I reply.

“I am. I said I would help you, and I fucking will, but I’m not spending all morning chatting to you. First, we build up your lacking core strength and stamina, and then we work on ability.”

“I did self-defence—” I stop as he laughs, a full-bodied, deep and sexy as sin laugh. I shiver as he stops and starts jogging away.

“At least you’re funny, baby.” He is such an asshole. I jog to catch up with him, and I choose to stay just behind him as we run down a path to the fence and then start running alongside it, past the Hellers guarding the other side. Seems they aren’t worried about us escaping, but they are worried about something else getting in. We keep a good pace to the end of the fence near the cliff, and then he turns around and makes us run all the way back. We do this four times, and on the fifth time, I stop halfway, sucking in deep breaths as I wipe the sweat off my face and away from my eyes.

Can my eyes sweat? I’m pretty sure they are right now.

“Why did you stop?” Mr. Morganach asks me, storming right up to me and grabbing my shoulders. I look up at him as he breathes heavily, his green eyes once again taking up that stormy, fire-burning colour I really like.

Even if it scares me.

“I can’t run anymore. I need a break and a drink,” I say, and he narrows his eyes, shoving me away. I trip backward, slamming onto the ground. I lift my arm, feeling the tiny cuts from the gravel as Mr. Morganach stands over me.

“You’re pathetic. Don’t bother coming back tomorrow if you need a break.” For the first time, his words actually hurt as I sit up and watch him walk away.

\* \* \*

“HERE, THAT SHOULD DO,” Sera says as she finishes bandaging my arm after helping me wash all the gravel from the cuts. I don’t meet her eyes as I take the clothes into the bathroom and get changed into the uniform of this place—a tight white top that does little to hide my boobs, and small blue and black thatched skirt that falls to my mid-thigh. I leave my hair down and stare at myself for a second.

My parents went to this school, they could have even had this room for all I know, and they didn't tell me any of it.

*Why?*

I asked about their past many times and why we didn't have any other family. They told me they were both foster kids and met in college. It was all bullshit because they must have met here. I don't even know if they had any family I should be aware of. Why all the lies? I get even more confused when I remember seeing Dad in that cage, hurt and muttering about things I don't understand rather than explaining all the lies.

I don't know if I'm angrier at them or more scared for them. Why is this so hard?

"We need to get going, Lexi," Sera says from the other side of the door. I look into my eyes one more time, knowing this isn't the time to have a breakdown. I need to be stronger than this. Screw Mr. Morganach. Screw all the lies I've been told. This is my life, and I have to focus on surviving it until the trial. I walk to the door and pull it open, seeing Sera smiling sympathetically at me.

"We can do this, right?" I ask, and she nods. It's not the confident answer I need, but it will do. "So what is the first class?"

"Learning to Hex and then you have no more classes for today. There is usually Necromancy 101, but the teacher is in hell for a few weeks," she explains to me. "It's all written on here, and I spent three weeks learning my way around the academy before you got here, so I can show you where to go. I'm not new like you, though, as I was attending a family wedding in hell. Weddings take months down there and they are so boring."

"Thanks," I say, walking with her to the door. I pull it open and head outside, and Sera closes it behind me. "I didn't ask yesterday, but can you really shift into a wolf?"

"Yes, but only once a month on a full moon. It's my only night off," she explains to me. "That's only because my mother was human and I'm only a half breed. A full-blooded wolf can shift whenever they like."

"There is so much to learn. I feel so lost," I mutter, and Sera nods, not knowing what to say as we pass the Lucifer statue and head down the right corridor I haven't gone near before. We head straight into the crowd of students and wolves rushing around to get to their classes, and luckily I just blend in with the rest of the crowd, though a few people point and stare. They will get used to me being here, I guess. Sera directs me to the fifth

door down the corridor, where three wolves in green dresses and green shirts to tell them apart stand in a line by the wall.

“I’m going to line up, and I will see you after. Good luck in your first class,” she whispers to me before heading to the line. I hate that she has to line up like she is nothing more than a slave. I hate that she can’t come inside the class with me. Flipping hell, I hate this academy, and I haven’t even had one class yet. I push the door open and walk in, locking eyes with the woman at the front of the classroom full of desks. She stands behind a desk which is bigger than all the others in the room and right in front of a large whiteboard that takes up the entire wall. There are four windows in the room on the one wall, and the room is painted the same orange colour that matches the headmaster’s office. The woman places her hands on her hips as I notice the seven other students in the room in the corner of my eye.

“Miss Cameron?” the woman asks, sounding a little Irish to me. It would explain her pale skin and curly orange hair. She wears a cloak with the red DA symbol on it, and under the cloak, I can see a straight A-line black dress. She also wears heels, which make my flat shoes look out of place. Thankfully Letitia and Maggie aren’t in this class, but then again, I don’t know anyone else in the crowd. They all stare at me like I’ve grown two heads, though. “Or do you not have a name? Or can you not talk?” The class starts laughing as I mentally pretend that this isn’t happening to me. In my old school, I was nothing more than the nobody that no one ever noticed. I didn’t wear clothes like this; I wore a blazer three times larger than needed and baggy black trousers because we couldn’t afford a new uniform, and all my clothes were borrowed.

“Sorry, yes that’s me,” I finally say, which only makes the laughter louder from the students.

“Brilliant; my name is Mrs. Herman. Welcome to Learning to Hex. This is for you.” She holds up a leather-bound book, and I walk over, sliding it into my hands. “Do not lose your spellbook. There won’t be a second, and then you will fail my class. That is punishable by death.”

“Understood,” I say, though I think it’s a tad bit extreme. I’m not telling her that.

“Go and find a seat, Miss Cameron,” she suggests, and I quickly walk past the three full rows of students until I find an empty row. I place my spellbook down and open the first page, seeing nothing but plain, aged yellow paper. Before I can ask Mrs. Herman about it, she starts talking.

“Welcome, everyone, to Learning to Hex. For the students who are hexing, please go to the back of the classroom and choose a test subject in the cage room. For the students that are not at the right level to hex, and the new girl, stay in your seats,” Mrs. Herman says, and I’m assuming they use rats or frogs to test on. Who actually knows though? This place is crazy. All the students except for one guy get out of their seats and go to the doors at the back of the classroom and soon disappear into them.

“George, how many lessons have we had now?” Mrs. Herman asks, walking over to his desk and sitting on the edge right in front of him. I can’t see anything but the back of his head and his blond hair, but man, I think he is scared from the way he shakes a little bit. Mrs. Herman reminds me of a snake right at this moment.

“T-t-twenty,” he stutters, coughing on his nerves.

“Then I’m afraid if you cannot hex by now, you will never learn it,” she says and places her hand on his shoulder as she leans into him. It all looks innocent until I smell the blood in the air. His body suddenly tenses, and he coughs, spitting blood all over the front of her cloak. I rapidly climb out my seat and run over, stopping at the end of his desk as Mrs. Herman pulls her hand out of his chest, dripping with blood. “Your death is the beginning. Your king welcomes you to hell, blessed child. All praise Lucifer.” His body slumps onto the floor, and I’m so in shock that I can do nothing but stare at Mrs. Herman, hearing my heart beating in my ear and feeling bile rise in my throat.

“I have a body to get rid of, but you can go and watch your fellow classmates for the rest of the lesson. Think of it as hands-on experience. We can learn some hex spells next week,” she says, leaning over the table and grabbing George’s ankle. With crazy strength that she shouldn’t have, she pulls his body over the table, and onto the other side before walking off, dragging him behind her. “If you are going to puke, do it in the sink,” she suggests as she leaves the room. I run to the sink just seconds before I throw up the cereal and toast I had today, gasping as I slide down onto the floor.

My teacher just killed a student like it was nothing more than killing a fly. Holy hell. I wipe my mouth and stand up, my legs feeling more than a little shaky as I walk to the doors at the back. I push them open and freeze as I take in the rows of cages, each with a person inside. The people don’t

even look my way as I take in their dirty clothes and the god-awful smell in here.

“Let me guess, George is dead?” a girl asks, walking over to me with a human trailing behind her like he is tied to an invisible rope. I just nod, lost for words, and she sighs. “That’s a shame, though he really wasn’t good at anything. What about you, new girl? Are you going to run away or stay to watch?”

“What’s your name?” I find myself able to say, not answering her though.

“Lela; and you are Alexandria. Everyone has bets on you passing out a few times this week; I made a bet you wouldn’t. So come on, what are you going to do?” she asks.

“This is wrong,” I mutter.

“So wrong...but a little part of you likes the pain they are in. That part of you is your demon, and that’s the reason you haven’t run away yet,” she tells me. “A few students have run away, and all of them are dead. Don’t do that.”

“I-I,” I stutter, shaking my head and looking back at the cages. Lela walks around me, the middle-aged human following after her.

“If it makes you feel any better, we get all our prisoners from prisons, and they all are serving a death or life penalty. They aren’t the good guys,” she tells me, but it doesn’t make it better to see all these people in cages. No matter what they did. I hate that Lela is right...a sick part of me wants to stay here and watch.

“Are we good?” I whisper mostly to myself, but Lela answers.

“Hell no. Being the good guy means you constantly get screwed over and never get what you want. I’m happy being a demon...aren’t you?” she asks. “Or do you want to play human, pretending that it is okay that no one likes you because they can sense you are different.” I don’t answer her again, mostly because she is dead right, instead moving my eyes to the guy she has.

“Do you know what he did?” I ask.

“No, but I know every single one of them is a monster. Just like us. Now shut it and watch if you aren’t running or passing out,” she demands, but there is a little smirk on her lips.

“Ah good, you are still standing and only looking a little pale. I’m rather impressed,” Mrs. Herman says, coming to stand in the middle of Lela and

me. “Now, Miss Daunt, cast a hex.”

“Of course, Mrs. Herman,” she replies and winks at me before turning her attention to the man standing in front of us, his head cast down. Lela holds her hand in the air, and suddenly it glows red. In the blink of an eye, she traces symbols into the air, where they stay burning in the air until she stops and blows them at the man. The symbols glow on his skin where they hit before disappearing, and his eyes turn as red as the sun.

“Now, my awful-smelling human, dance for me,” Lela says, her voice different and making me imagine what a snake would sound like if they could speak.

“I prefer salsa dancing,” Mrs. Herman muses as we all watch the man sway and spin around.

“You heard the teacher, salsa for us.” The human changes the dance in the blink of an eye, doing a very bad salsa dance performance.

“Extremely good work, Lela. Alexandria, isn’t she impressive?” Mrs. Herman asks, and I can only nod, watching the man’s eyes.

I bet he wished for death rather than this, and I now understand why my parents never told me about this world.

If they did, I doubt I would have ever been able to sleep again.

## CHAPTER 9

### SURPRISE, SURPRISE. THERE IS A MAGIC STONE



“You can sleep anywhere in this whole apartment, and you choose my pillow to drool on?” I mutter as I pull my shirt on and start doing the buttons up. My legs, back, stomach, and even my toes hurt from the run this morning with Mr. Morganach, but I didn’t stop until he stopped, and then I just walked away from him. I’m not wasting my time speaking to the asshole. I really, really don’t like him.

“Don’t wake me, demon. I need my sleep,” she says, rolling over onto her back and stretching out further.

“She is always meowing at you. It’s so odd,” Sera says as she walks into the room as I do my tie up, leaving it loose across my shirt. Odd is an understatement for Amethyst, but alright.

“If I told you I could understand her, what would you say?” I ask, and she just laughs.

“That you are very funny, Lexi. Cats can’t talk,” she says, shaking her head as she chuckles and walks out. *If only she knew.* I walk out of my bedroom, slipping on my flat black shoes near the doorway. Sera waits for me by the door and opens it for me when I walk over.

“Thanks,” I say, stepping out, and she follows me, shutting the door behind her. The difference from inside the apartment is straightaway noticeable, and I hate it. She keeps her head bowed down, her shoulders tense, and everything about her screams scared. I know there is little I can do about it without calling attention to her, and I don’t want to do that. She wants to stay as invisible as I do. We walk out of the corridor and pass a group of students resting against the Lucifer statue’s arms, speaking quite loudly so that I can’t help but hear them as we walk past.



“They are back tomorrow apparently,” one girl says.

“Who?” the other asks.

“Who do you think?” The one girl laughs. “The Lucifer sons. I’ve never met them, but I’m looking forward to it. Apparently, they are even more handsome than Lucifer himself.”

“Be careful who you say that to,” the other replies.

“Oh stop being so scared of him. Lucifer is in hell; how would he punish you for something he can’t hear you say?” she asks.

“He is our king,” the other whispers.

“But the Lucifer sons are our princes, and I don’t know about you, but I’d like to get underneath one of them. Or both,” the other replies, and they start giggling as I roll my eyes. What’s so special about sex? Or having sex with guys that are likely going to be total douchebags because they are pretty. I’d rather have someone who actually wants more than one night and then pretends like you don’t exist afterward. I saw enough heartbroken girls crying in the school bathrooms to know that’s how sex with teenage guys usually plays out.

We head straight down the corridor, and Sera opens a door which leads into another, much smaller passageway to the next corridor. This corridor I haven’t been in, and it has far fewer doors, just three that I can see. Sera points to the open one in front of us and lifts her head up to smile briefly at me. I smile back just before she goes and lines up with the other two wolves standing by the wall, their heads bowed. I almost pause when I see the scars all over one of the wolf’s arm, some looking new and sore.

I hear the chatter of students from inside the classroom as I walk in, seeing Maggie first as she sits on a chair near the front of the class, a wooden desk in front of her that she has her high-heeled feet leaning on. I briefly see eight other students in the room, none of them pay more than a glance at me, but Maggie keeps her eyes fixed on me. She raises an eyebrow at me, a much less friendly expression on her lips as I ignore her and walk past to find an empty seat. She reaches out, grabbing my wrist tightly, and I tighten my hand into a fist, praying I find the strength not to slam it into her face.

“Mr. Morganach is off-limits. You understand me?” she whispers, but it’s a threat.

“Does someone have a crush on their teacher?” I ask, pulling my wrist out of her hand with a strength I didn’t know I had, and I feel nothing but

extremely angry all of a sudden.

“You’re learning quick. Be careful when your demon does take control, little friend,” she warns with a laugh.

“You are only taller than me because of those heels you wear, short-arse,” I sarcastically reply, feeling all that anger controlling me as I walk to the back and find an empty seat and sit down.

*Kill her.*

I gasp as a woman’s voice whispers into my mind, and my body jolts, like it wants to get up and do just what the woman suggested. I look down at my fingers, which I swear for a brief second looked like my fingertips were black and my nails were sharper than I ever have seen them. I shake my head and blink, and my hands are normal once again, just plain golden skin. I look up, seeing Maggie watching me with a secretive smirk on her lips. I suck in a deep breath, knowing I can’t rise to whatever game she is now playing. I must just be hearing things.

“Welcome, class, good to see all of you are on time,” a man says, coming into the room and dropping a pile of old books onto the desk at the front. There is no whiteboard in this room, and it’s just orange walls with peeling paper in the corners and the same white shiny tiles that are in all the rooms by the looks of it. “Is the new girl here? Miss Cameron?” he asks, and I hold my hand up, drawing his attention to me. He quickly walks down the middle of the desk and stops in front of mine, offering me his hand to shake. I slide my hand into his without much thought, and he nods, shaking it firmly before letting go.

“Welcome to The Choosing class. I am Mr. Johan. We meet twice a week, in which we will study the five speciality classes you can take next year and end up working in if you survive DA,” he says and spins around, walking slowly down the desks. “Will someone tell Miss Cameron the five specialities that are available?”

“I can, sir!” a guy with red hair and freckles says from two desks in front of me. Mr. Johan nods at him as he walks past. “Manipulation. Hell hunters, but most people call them Hellers. Hell Executioner. Supernatural Politics, and finally Gatekeepers.”

“Very good, would someone else briefly explain each of the specialities?” Mr. Johan asks, and Maggie puts her hand up.

“Manipulation is the art of voodoo and hexes, and using them to manipulate important humans in governments around the world to make

sure our kind stay a secret,” Maggie explains. Good to know demons have been all around us for so long and they are properly making the world a disaster like it currently is. If demons feed off pain and suffering, then they must be rolling in it at the moment.

“Very good. Manipulation is one of our most important specialities. It is the only reason our kind and the supernaturals we have truces with have kept our existence a secret for many years,” Mr. Johan enlightens me on that, but I raise my hand.

“Yes, Miss Cameron?” he asks.

“Then what happened in New York, Greece and London? Everyone said it was a woman with powers,” I ask. “That wasn’t kept a secret very well.”

“There is one supernatural race who is well hidden and doesn’t usually cause trouble, but they did on those terrible days. We call them the tales, and that was one of their race’s doing. We are currently in peace agreements with their new leadership now that the threat is over,” he explains to me, though that doesn’t make a whole lot of sense. Why would a race be called tales? Like fairy tales? Holy hell, this world I’ve just been dropped into is weird. “Please explain another speciality, Miss Menzora.”

“Hell hunters are the army of our kind and important to keep everyone and everything in line. A hell executioner is exactly what the name suggests, and not many demons choose to take that job. Supernatural politics is a job for those skilled at dealing with other races and knowing the right thing to say. Last but not least, gatekeepers are the guardians of the doors of hell. They make sure no demons who are not permitted ever leave hell, no creatures and monsters escape. Gatekeepers are the heroes among us who do not care about dying in order to protect the world.”

“Very correct, Miss Menzora,” Mr. Johan replies and leans against the desk at the front, keeping his arms pressed against his chest as he looks to me. “What would you choose, Miss Cameron?”

“None,” I reply, which makes a few students gasp.

“Why?” he asks, not looking anything but interested.

“I’m not a murderer; I’m not a politician or a soldier. I’m currently not good at manipulating people, and last but not least, I’m no hero,” I list.

“What an interesting student you are. It has been over a year since anyone ever gave me that answer,” he replies.

“Who was stupid enough to say that answer, sir?” Maggie asks.

“The sons of Lucifer. They answered very similarly to Miss Cameron, and I wouldn’t say she is stupid at all. Miss Cameron and the Lucifer sons did what most will never do, they were honest about their nature,” he replies, and I smile at Maggie.

“Everyone knows the Lucifer sons are cursed to hell no matter what they want once their demons appear,” Maggie huffs.

“Careful,” Mr. Johan warns, and for a second, his eyes glow green, bright enough to hurt my own eyes.

“Sorry, sir,” she mumbles, shifting her gaze down to the desk. Mr. Johan gets himself under control and clicks his neck in a way that makes me cringe, before straightening up.

“Either way, it doesn’t matter. The red stone of hell will choose the speciality that best suits you at the end of the year. You will spend the final two years training in whichever is chosen,” he explains.

“I’m looking forward to holding the stone,” Maggie says, sounding sheepish.

“Many do look forward to it. The stone is the only object in this world—in heaven and hell—that knows what everyone wants in their soul. It knows who you are,” he says. We are all silent for a moment before Mr. Johan starts talking about exploring each one of the specialities in great detail and that they are halfway through the books on Hellers.

The only thing I can think of as he goes on is how I want to hold the stone. Maybe it can tell me who I am, because I don’t have a clue.

I doubt anything but a magical fucking stone could tell me at this point, and with how confused I am, I bet I will break it.

## CHAPTER 10

THERE IS A BIG, BAD WOLF AFTER ALL



“I’ve decided you being a demon has its benefits for me. I have never tasted food this nice. You must have been feeding me poorly before; it is the only explanation I can think of. How could you do that to me?” Amethyst asks as she jumps onto the sofa next to me and curls up in a ball, looking up at me for an answer with her big purple eyes. She somehow makes me feel bad, even though I shouldn’t.

“I’m not hand making you meals like the cooks do here,” I warn her.

“Why ever not?” she asks.

“Because you’re a cat,” I point out.

“And I should be treated as nothing but the royalty I am. Honestly, you are a terrible person, and it’s best you accept it,” she says before resting her head down and drifting off to sleep as I watch her with a smile. She can always make me smile, though. The door opens from the bedroom, and Sera walks out with a wash basket full of clothes and some blankets.

“Hey, you alright?” Sera asks, stopping near the sofa, resting her hip on it. “I was just going downstairs to wash these, but I will be back in about an hour. I can stay if you want.”

“I’m fine, don’t worry. It was just a long, very strange day,” I reply to her.

“Wanna talk about it?” she gently asks.

“I talked to Maggie, you know one of the bitchy chicks I told you about, and she made me angry—like blindingly angry. The sort I’ve never been over anything. When I forced myself to walk away and sit down, my fingertips were black and my nails were long—deadly long and sharp,” I

tell her. “I heard a voice in my head that kind of sounded like me, and it told me to kill her, and I wanted to. Does that make me a monster?”

“Your demon is awakening because you are around your kind. I’ve never seen a fully-shifted demon before, so I don’t know what you guys look like, but I imagine it’s scary. I just know wolves need to be around other wolves to shift,” she explains to me. “As for being a monster, you could never be one. Your human side is there to counter your demon side; otherwise, every one of your kind would just go around killing.”

“Are angels the same?” I ask, not in agreement that we aren’t monsters. Hell, she is my fucking slave. That makes us monsters on its own.

“No, angels are like nothing else, but they are secretive about their kind. No one knows much,” she explains to me.

“Then why is Mr. Morganach working here as a teacher?” I ask.

“I’ve heard some whispers in the kitchens...” she says, and I lean forward, not sure why I’m so interested in what the asshole did. “Apparently, he killed another angel, and this is his punishment. He is banished from heaven until he pays his price.”

“Why would he kill one of his own kind?” I ask.

“You said he wasn’t very nice—”

“I said he was an asshole, and actually, do you ever swear? I don’t think I’ve heard you swear before,” I interrupt.

“Swearing isn’t ladylike, or that’s what my father taught me,” she explains to me.

“Your dad isn’t here,” I say with a grin, seeing how red her cheeks are as she shakes her head.

“Oh, I couldn’t. Do you want me to stay?” she asks, changing the subject.

“Nope, I’m going to have an early night anyway. I’m still aching from the run this morning,” I tell her.

“It will get easier the more you come closer to your inner demon and the shift. You will get demon strength, demon agility, and be able to see in the dark. Demons have some cool powers, I’ve heard,” she explains to me. “Demons and angels are equally matched on Earth. You might even be able to beat Mr. Morganach one day.”

“Demons also feed off pain and murder,” I mutter. “I’m not sure I want to be like that, even if it means beating Mr. Morganach.”

“Well, yes, there is that,” she mutters with a frown. “If it helps, my wolf likes to eat rats when she takes over. It’s seriously gross to wake up in rat blood and bones.”

“It does help. We are gross monsters, but at least we aren’t crazy,” I reply with a big smile.

“Speak for yourself, Lexi,” she says with a small laugh, and I can’t help but laugh with her as she walks to the door and leaves the apartment. I climb to my feet and stretch a little as I hear the pitter-patter of the heavy rain against the window outside. Walking around the couch, I head to the window and look over the stormy sea through the rain. It really is one hell of a view: lights from the academy just about illuminate the sea, which crashes into the rocky cliff before falling back down into the ocean and repeating the cycle all over again. It’s almost soothing to watch the sea pound into the cliffs, again and again, never making a visible difference but slowly eroding the rocks. The sea never gives up. I need to be more like the sea, more resilient and stronger.

My parents need that from me. I have to get them out of the mess they got themselves into. I step closer to the glass when something catches my eyes, a reflection in the darkness of the rocks. The moonlight from the half-moon shines down around the part of the rock where something caught my eye. I stare longer, and shock freezes my feet to the spot as a wolf the size of a friggin’ car crashes through the window and knocks me onto the ground, glass cutting into my legs and arms. My breathing is heavy as I try not to move as the smoky brown wolf leans down, baring its teeth as a long growl leaves its throat, the sound so loud it vibrates through me.

Where is this inner demon to protect me? Mine is flipping broken.

“There is a dog in here,” Am feels the need to state nervously from somewhere nearby. “I’m going to leave you to it. I’m not a dog person.”

“You’re not a person at flipping all,” I mutter, regretting talking out loud when the wolf growls once more, moving even closer to me just seconds before its wet nose brushes across my cheek.

“Please don’t kill me,” I whisper. “My parents need me to help them escape. If I die, everything they did to protect me is for nothing.” I have no idea if the wolf can understand me, but he suddenly steps over me, and I let out the breath I was holding, and the tears pricking my eyes finally fall down my cheeks. I shakily stand up as the wolf moves in front of the sofa,

and I step back as the wolf makes some god awful clicking and snapping noise and disappears, only to be replaced by a guy.

A naked guy.

A very, *very* attractive naked guy. He has shoulder-length, wavy black hair that is tucked behind his ears, his skin the same colour as Sera with a golden tan. His muscles look like they have their own muscles, and there are two bands of tattoos around his upper arms. I don't dare look down any further, knowing once I look, there is no going back from that. I do spot three claw marks straight across his chest, and they look like they were once a nasty injury.

"Where is my sister?" he asks me, his voice deeper than most guys. It has a sexy hum to it that is borderline illegally seductively calling to me.

"Sera?" I ask because I really don't know any other wolves. The guy just nods once, sniffing the air.

"I know this is her room, and that makes you her master. Where the fuck is she?" he demands, getting angrier.

"She went to do some washing. I'm sure she will be back soon," I tell him because he honestly looks like he is going to rip my head off at any moment, and I'm clearly as powerful as a dull knife against a pineapple.

"If one hair on my sister's head is missing, I will murder you. Understood?" he asks, and to my surprise, he sits down, his legs wide and not one care in the world for his nudity.

"Oh my. I've just changed my mind, I'm now a dog person," Amethyst says as she walks into the room, her freaky, purple cat eyes fixed on the naked wolf on my sofa. He growls at her, and all the hairs go up on her back. "Change of mind. Good to see the dog didn't eat you. I have things to do." I watch as she runs back into the bedroom, kicking the door shut behind her. That was a poor rescue attempt or whatever that was. I step to the side, the glass cracking under my shoes, and I thank my common sense for not changing out of them earlier.

"Don't leave," he commands me. "I have not given you permission."

"I'm going to get you a blanket," I say, walking across the room. "And you know what? I don't need your permission, whoever the fuck you are. I'm pretty sure it would be illegal for you to kill me, and Sera would be the one who suffered if you did. So try speaking to—" I cry out as he slams me into the wall, somehow not really hurting me as his hands grip my hands tightly above my head in one smooth motion. I'm stupid as all I can focus



on when we are this close is how his eyes are as gray as heavy, rain-filled clouds that always appeared when my dad said we should have a barbecue growing up.

Saying the word barbecue pretty much conjures storms in Scotland.

“I am soon to be alpha of every wolf shifter in the world, and I make the rules about what is illegal between our kinds and what is not. If I want to fucking murder you here and now, I could and would,” he growls, making me shiver.

“Alpha is a leader, right?” I ask.

“Yes,” he mutters, the gray, stormy eyes are so much more this close up. Making me want to dive right into the storm and not look back.

“Then why would you risk war to kill me? I’m not special; aren’t your people worth more than your anger?” I ask.

“I think you need to stop talking real soon, girl,” he warns me.

“That’s not something I do well. Talking is a nervous twitch of mine, and you currently have me pressed against the wall while you’re naked and threatening to kill me,” I reply to him, and I’m speaking way too quickly. His lips twitch for a second.

“Javier!” Sera’s voice rings across the room, and Javier drops me like a bowling ball, letting me fall very ungracefully to the floor as he turns to his sister. I sit up to see Sera throw a blanket at him, and he ties it around his waist before hugging her. She looks over at me and pushes Javier away, running to me as I stand up. “You’re bleeding, Lexi. I’m so sorry; my brother is nothing short of a possessive fool at times.”

“I’d call him a right prick, but possessive fool works too,” I say, narrowing my eyes at Javier who glares right back at me.

“Javier! Say sorry right now! Lexi has done nothing but protect me and treat me as her equal. She doesn’t deserve this!” Sera demands.

“Alphas do not say sorry. Ever,” he replies.

“Well, I’m sorry, Lexi. Are any of the cuts bad?” she asks, moving around me and looking at my leg. I flinch as she pulls something out of a cut on my shoulder and comes back around. “Everything looks small. Go and sit down, and I will get the first aid kit. At this rate, I should just leave it out,” she mutters.

“Might be a good idea,” I say, and she chuckles at me, before turning to Javier.

“You sit down too, Jav,” Sera says, but she isn’t as commanding as her brother. To my surprise, he goes and sits down on one of the chairs, and I sit on the sofa, as far away as I can get from him. I pretty much ignore him, hearing his huffs every few seconds before Sera comes back and sits next to me on the sofa. I turn my back to her, forcing me to face her wayward brother.

“Why are you here, Javier? You know Father would be so mad if he knew,” Sera says as I flinch as she cleans the cuts on my back with what feels like wet antiseptic wipes. Smells like it too.

“I had to see if you are okay. You know I don’t agree with all this,” he replies.

“But there isn’t anything you can do here but cause a war, Javier,” she tells him.

“You’re my sister; I’m not letting you have a terrible life here—”

“It’s not terrible. I wasn’t lying before, Lexi is—”

“A demon, Serafin! If you were on the floor in pain, she would feed off your pain and leave you suffering. Demons are fucking monsters,” he growls at her.

“Coming from the wolf with big bad teeth,” I mutter, and he growls at me. I roll my eyes, flinching once again as Sera cleans a cut on my other shoulder. Javier just smiles. Asshole.

“Lexi is not a monster any more than you and I are. I trust her,” Sera tells him.

“Seriously? You trust this mess of a demon in front of you?” he asks.

“Yes, and I want you to as well,” she demands.

“No,” he replies.

“Javier, come on. I’m happy, can’t you see that? I could have a much worse fate than this, and Father would never accept you starting a war to take me from here like I know you want to,” she tells him.

“Fine, but I’m coming to check on you every Saturday. Understood?” he finally replies, giving in.

“Okay, if you insist,” she says, smiling at me, her eyes apologetic.

“I do,” he firmly tells her.

“I will make sure to be out of the room—”

“You will have to be here too. If you aren’t in your room, I have to go with you, remember?” Sera reminds me.

“Shit, sorry, I forgot,” I say.

“A demon saying sorry to a wolf. I’ve seen everything now,” Javier blandly remarks.

“Will you stop it, Javier Moss Luque. You two need to get along to make this work,” Sera snaps.

“Why?” Javier and I say at the same time.

“Never mind,” Sera mutters, and I go back to glaring at the wolf until Sera says she is all done.

“I’m going to bed early; it’s just been madness today,” I say, standing up, and Javier stands at the same time. He walks right up to me, keeping his eyes locked with mine.

“You protect my sister, or the Lunar wolf pack will never stop hunting you,” he warns me.

“You’re not alpha yet, right?” I smirk. “I don’t think you have the right to say that.”

“Whoa, stop with the threats,” Sera says, pushing her way between us. I shake my head, knowing I’m done for the night. I walk away, and look over my shoulder, seeing Javier’s eyes firmly fixed on me.

“Don’t forget to fix the window, Javier. I doubt your wolfly charm will be able to make it fix itself.” I escape into my room before I can hear his no doubt short-tempered reply. I seriously need to work on my charm; I feel like all I do is pick up enemies by the payload.

One day, one of them is going to bite me in the ass. Quite literally, I suspect, if Javier has anything to do with it.

## CHAPTER 11

### SOME THINGS NEED TO STAY A SECRET



“Good work today,” Mr. Morganach says almost breathlessly as he stops running. I come to a halt at his side, sucking in a breath as I try not to look like I’m close to passing the hell out. It’s been three days since I came to this academy and started these lessons, but at least I’m keeping up with the crazy asshole angel. I nod at him and turn around, heading to the steps up to the academy. Mr. Morganach flies over me, and I look up, seeing nothing but glistening abs as he lands at the top of the steps, watching me as I walk up to them and step around him. His arm snaps out, blocking me from stepping further. My eyes trail up his firm arms, his muscular, large shoulders until I meet his eyes. “Are you not speaking to me anymore? Did I hurt your feelings, baby?”

I push his arm away, and his laughter fills my ears as I storm away from him, refusing to speak to the lunatic until he says sorry or decides to be a better person. He jogs past me like he has to be in front. He is such a child. I stop to do my laces on my trainers up before walking into the academy.

Honestly, I suspect neither of those things is going to happen anytime soon. I head straight inside, only pausing when I see Maggie and Mr. Morganach quietly talking together. Her hand rests on his arm like they are familiar with each other, and he is smiling at her as she giggles. So he hates me but likes one of the crazy bitch twins?

Not that it matters if he hates me or not, but it would sure make it easier if he could at least pretend to like me, considering we are now spending every morning together.

“Don’t be late for my class, Miss Cameron,” he warns as I walk past. I made Sera stay in her room this morning, and I don’t even care if anyone

tells me off about it.

“You’re the teacher for survival basics today?” I ask him, stopping just briefly.

“Who else would be? Don’t you know angels are the best fighters?” Maggie asks.

“How on earth would I know that? I’ve been in this fucked-up world less than four days,” I say, and Maggie chuckles.

“We have a natural ability that means fighting and combat are our specialities,” Mr. Morganach explains, his eyes flickering between Maggie and me.

“Don’t the wings get in the way?” I ask.

“Nope, baby. They just make the fight interesting,” he replies, and I actually smile at him.

“Don’t you have to shower or something?” Maggie says, this time her voice is nothing short of impatient and pissed off all rolled into one.

“Yep. See you guys later,” I say, not looking back as I walk away but feeling Mr. Morganach’s and Maggie’s eyes on me anyway as I head down the corridor, seeing no one else as it’s too early for most people. I get the impression Maggie woke up super early to *accidentally* bump into Mr. Morganach. I don’t get it; he is a right asshole and completely uncrushable. I get my key card out and open the door, walking in to smell the breakfast Sera is cooking.

“Morning! You okay?” Sera asks me as I come in and pull out a stool from the counter and sit on it, resting my elbows on the counter and looking at the pancake pile, the cut-up fruit in a bowl next to it, and the range of syrups Sera has gotten out.

“I’m okay, are you?” I ask her, looking around the room. “Where is Amethyst?”

“She left after breakfast,” she explains to me. “First time I’ve seen her leave the room actually.”

“Strange, she doesn’t usually leave,” I muse.

“I wanted to apologise for Javier and everything that happened,” she says. She doesn’t give me a second to say anything as she carries on word vomiting. “When we grew up, it was just Jav and me. Anytime anyone said anything to me, Jav would beat them until they forgot who I was, and eventually no one picked on me. That and the way the pack is, the

expectations on his shoulders as the alpha's only son...it makes him like he is."

"Angry? Unreasonable?" I suggest.

"Yes, and he sees me as all he has left of his family, at least family that he gets along with. Our father is difficult, and his mother...well, she is a whole other story," she tells me. "Please give him a chance when he calms down. Wolves, especially males, are driven by their possessive nature."

"She isn't your mother then?" I gently ask. I guess I knew that because she is a bastard-born, but I want to know her story.

"His mother killed mine because of the affair that created me. My father won't speak about my mother much, other than to say I'm very much like her. An alpha bastard being born is unheard of in our packs, as alphas and their mates—the omegas—have an unbreakable bond. I really don't know how my father pushed back the magic of the bond and loved my mother, but here I am," she whispers, her voice laced in emotions that I could never understand.

"This is a lot of information. So wolves have mates? Like husbands and wives but linked with magic?" I ask.

"All races do. Even you will find your other half, a demon, of course," she says. "There is even a chance you could find more than one if your mates are twins or triplets."

"I have a soul mate out there?" I mutter with wide eyes.

"We don't call it soul mates, just mates, but you'll know when you meet them. Not only will you be instantly attracted to your mate, but a part of you will always want to know them. Or be near them somehow. Most people just find out if they are mates by having sex," she explains to me.

"Sex makes you mates?" I ask.

"Yes, it's that simple and why most supernaturals have sex with different species in case they sleep with their mate by accident, and then they are bonded for life to someone," she tells me. "That's how wolves end up with bastard children because they use humans for sex, and they are shocked when those humans end up pregnant."

"So most people don't want to be bonded for life to their mate?" I ask. "I can understand that; I don't want to bond to anyone either."

"If they like them, then sure, it would be great. But if they don't..." she trails off.

"It would be a prison," I fill in for her.

“Exactly,” she says. “You can also make a bond to your mate by exchanging blood. I’ve heard rumours that smelling the blood of your mate is very attractive and seductive. It’s a sure sign.”

“Not that dating is on my priority list above surviving at the moment, but thanks for the information. I’m going to eat, then shower before class,” I tell her, knowing I need to get moving despite how my whole body wants to lie on the sofa for the rest of the day.

“You have to wear workout trousers and no tie today. It said in the booklet I was given,” she says, pushing a plate across the table toward me.

“Thanks. So can you find a mate across species at all?” I ask.

“No, or at least I’ve never heard of it happening before. It would be big news in our world, considering the peace treaty between the angels, demons, and werewolves would not allow a new race to be born,” she explains.

“So there are no half children?” I ask.

“Only two that have survived to teenagers. Every other half born has died before the age of five. Many believed it was just not possible for anyone to live, but the Lucifer brothers are different,” she carefully says.

“Lucifer brothers?” I ask.

“Lucifer had two sons eighteen years ago with a demon named Lilith. They were brought up on Earth with human foster parents in secret until a few years back when Lucifer let the world know of their existence. They now attend this school,” she tells me.

“I heard they are back from hell today,” I say, remembering the girls talking by the statue.

“Then you best get moving to survival basics. It sounds like it’s going to be a fun lesson,” she winks at me, and I chuckle before carrying on eating my food.

\* \* \*

“AM, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?” I whisper to Amethyst as I take my shoes off outside the gym room and Sera picks them up, holding them for me before walking to the line of wolves. Amethyst ignores me as she walks through the open door, and I follow her inside. The gym looks like any typical school gym with white painted walls and shiny tiles. It smells like

sweat like all gyms do, and the room is quickly filling up with students. Lela waves me over from her seat on the bleachers on the other side of the room. Unfortunately, Letitia and Maggie are sitting in front of her as I walk over, and I spot Amethyst running under the bleachers in the corner of my eye. I sit down next to Lela, crossing my arms as I wait for the rest of the students to come in.

“Does the whole year attend this class?” I ask, noticing how there must be over a hundred students in here.

“Yes, it’s the only class we all have to attend. Tomorrow is meant to be voodoo followed by necromancy, but both teachers aren’t here for a bit. It means we will have a quiet weekend at least,” she explains to me just as Mr. Morganach walks into the room, slamming the door shut behind him. Everyone is deadly silent as we watch him walk to the middle of the classroom, his large wings almost captivating to watch as the tips glide across the floor as he walks.

“Welcome to survival basics. If you fail to pass my class, only death awaits you,” he shouts, his voice echoing around the room, and I doubt I’m the only one that gets shivers. He is so young to be so commanding and pull it off well. It’s rather annoying. “As many of you have been trained in combat since you were children, who would like the first one-to-one lesson of the day?” I look to Lela who shakes her head before keeping her eyes cast down.

“He is impossible to beat. Don’t look his way, he will choose you then,” she whispers, carefully warning me, but I’m an idiot as I look at Mr. Morganach anyway, finding his eyes settled on me. His lips turn up in a self-satisfied smirk just before the doors are slammed open, and we both look toward the two guys walking in.

They aren’t just guys though...they are captivating to the point I can’t look away. I focus on the guy on the left, the strong jawline and dimples appearing as he smirks, his thick black hair that is slightly blond on the tips, almost like the sun itself kissed the ends, and it flows down to his shoulders, some parts braided. I never knew long hair on guys could be sexy, but damn, this guy pulls it off in a way that should be illegal. His eyes flicker up to the bleachers, not directly looking at me, but I still catch the unusual eye colour under his thick black lashes. It looks like green and purple waves crashing against each other, mixing together but never changing their colour. I move my gaze from his attractive appearance to the



school uniform he is wearing, which damn well suits him better than anyone I've seen.

The guy on the right must be his twin brother; there is no way he couldn't be with how similar they are. His black hair is much shorter and has a zigzag shaved on the side. His lip is pierced with a ring, and his eyes never move to the bleachers, so I don't get to see the colour. He mimics his brother with the impressive muscular bodies, the tight white shirt and black trousers of the uniform, and the very way they both carry themselves makes me straighten up in my seat.

"Don't be a Lucifer Crusher. Every girl here is one of them, and it gets boring," Lela warns me.

"They are appealing, but I'm pretty sure they are way out of my league," I tell her.

"Girl, have you seen a mirror?" she asks, and I just shrug, and she sighs.

"Why don't you like them?" I ask.

"They don't have boobs," she explains to me, making me chuckle. No, they certainly do not.

"Why don't you choose one of us? Make it a challenge for you, sir." The sarcasm in that sentence is so high that I'm shocked when Mr. Morganach just laughs. I recognise the voice though, and I can't picture where until Mr. Morganach says his name.

"Claus, I would say it's good to have you back, but I haven't missed your arrogant face. Let me smack the shit out of it so you aren't recognisable once again," Mr. Morganach says, clearly taunting Claus. *Claus*. He was the Heller outside my limo, the one who warned me, but why would he be pretending to be a Heller? Why would he risk telling me his name?

"Oh, sir, don't make promises you can't keep," Claus teases back, heading for the weapons in holders on the wall. The other guy walks up the bleachers before sitting on his own, ignoring everything around him as he gets a book out of his blazer and starts reading, his long hair covering his face.

A few girls sigh.

He is literally every girl's dream right there.

"Claus is the hothead, and Nikoli is the calmer one. Though I've heard he is far more aggressive in the bedroom; his demon likes to play then," Lela tells me, like I need to hear that.

“Who are they?” I ask, but I’m pretty sure I know from how everyone is looking at them. Like they are royalty, and in a way, I bet they are.

“The Lucifer brothers, of course. Tell me you’ve heard of them,” she asks.

“Just a little bit about them,” I mutter back just as I hear the clanging of metal that draws my attention to Claus and Mr. Morganach who are literally beating the shit out of each other with swords. Blood sprays around them as they nip each other’s skin and effectively block any attacks which would kill them. It’s clear these two have battled against each other before as they seem to know each other’s next move before they have done it. Mr. Morganach swiftly spins, locking his sword with Claus, and lifts him into the air before swinging him around and letting go. We all duck as Claus flies over us, crashing into the students right behind me.

“I won. Who is next?” Mr. Morganach says, and I turn around to see Claus clawing to his feet, coughing blood out onto the bleachers as people move away from him. He sits up, and his eyes meet mine, both of us just staring at each other. “You looked scared, Luke. Come on,” I hear Mr. Morganach saying in the background, but everything other than Claus’s swirly purple and green eyes seems to be real.

“New girl, we meet once again,” he muses with a cheeky grin. “Alexandria Cameron, correct?”

“Correct,” I repeat like a total loser. He smirks as he ever so slightly moves closer to me, his warm breath brushing against my lips.

“I don’t know why your parents bothered hiding you. You are nothing but a lower demon with empty-looking doll eyes that are going to get her killed,” he tells me. “But I will kill you myself if you tell anyone about when we first met.”

“You’re a real charmer, Claus Lucifer. Do all the girls fall for your smart-ass comments, or is it just your looks that draw them in? Because honestly, I’ve seen prettier guys than you,” I say, which is kind of true. I’m sticking with using humour instead of being terrified. Something about him scares me and attracts me all at the same time.

Mr. Morganach is attractive in a crazy way.

Javier is handsome in a wild way.

And that guy, Luc, I had a brief date with was super appealing.

“Hot guys are easy to come by in this world. What makes you so different, Claus?”

“Shut up,” Lela mutters to me, but I really don’t want to.

“When I’m inches away from killing you, you can say sorry for that shit you just said,” he warns me.

“No.”

“No?” another voice asks, and I look up to see Nikoli standing over us. He leans down, putting our faces inches away as his hand snakes out to grab my chin. “Who the fuck do you think you are saying no to?”

“Your brother—”

“I don’t care. Learn your place, lower demon, before we make you learn it,” Nikoli tells me before letting me go, and I drop to the bleachers, holding my sore chin as Nikoli walks away, followed by Claus.

“Will Alexandria Cameron come to the headmaster’s office immediately?” a Heller shouts, quieting all of us just as Mr. Morganach knocks out that poor guy, Luke, he was fighting. I stand up straightaway, walking down the steps as I hear all the whispers of the other students filling my ears.

Claus looks up at me as I pass him, and he winks at me like that was all some kind of joke.

One thing is decided: I really hate the guys of DA.

## CHAPTER 12

THERE ARE MORE DEMONS IN THE PAST THAN THE PRESENT



I knock on the headmaster's door three times before lowering my hand and listening for a second until I hear him shout me in. Pushing the door open, I meet the familiar looking eyes of a strange woman. She looks about my mother's age, possibly younger, with long dark brown hair and strange yellow eyes. Her black dress is more revealing than it needs to be with a long slit down the middle, and her red lips pull up into a big smile as we stare at each other.

"Alexandria," she says, her voice making her sound a lot older than she currently looks. So do her eyes, the more I stare at them.

"Please shut the door," Mr. Bisgaard instructs, and I push it closed, crossing my arms as the woman walks right up to me. She is a little shorter than me, not by much, and she moves her hand to cup my cheek.

"I always hoped my Leo would have a child and continue our family line, and here you are," she tells me, shocking me silent for a long time as I can only gaze at her. She is my grandmother? No flipping way.

"You can't be my dad's mum. You look the same age as him!" I say, shaking my head.

"You do remember we are immortal, Alexandria," she says, tears falling down her cheeks as she looks at me. "You belong to the Cameron family now, Alexandria. We are honoured to have you."

"Right," I say, stepping back out of her reach as Dad's words replay over and over in mind. He told me to remember that I don't belong to anyone. Why didn't he tell me about his mother living? I just don't understand why he wouldn't tell me. It was focused on me not belonging to anyone.

Maybe he meant his own family in that warning too.

“You don’t look happy to meet me,” she points out.

“You haven’t even told me your name,” I say.

“Egeria Cameron. Did Leo not tell you about me?” she asks.

“Both my dad and mum told me they had no living family,” I explain to her.

“That was a lie, one of many they told you, it seems, Alexandria. This is your grandmother, and you have an uncle on your mother’s side. Your uncle is staying at the Demon Star to keep an eye on your parents before the trial,” he explains to me. “He does send his apologies for not being able to meet you yet.”

“Why aren’t you with my parents, fighting for them to be free?” I ask her.

“Do you want the honest answer?” she asks, and I nod. “They killed five very important higher demons and destroyed their souls. Our line is not one of a higher family, and there is zero chance of them being freed. I am more interested in the child they will be leaving behind.”

“No!” I say, stepping back and looking to Mr. Bisgaard. “Are they going to be killed? Really?”

“There will be a fair trial, and they have called you as their only witness. You tell us if they will be killed?” he asks me. “What do you remember?”

“Why would they ask for me to be a witness?” I ask. “I don’t know anything.”

“You would have been about six or seven when the murder happened. Did you see anything?” he asks me. “Remember anything before that?”

“N-no,” I say, my voice catching as I remember something I pushed to the back of my mind. A room that was full of death, my mum’s hand plastered across my mouth to keep me from crying. I don’t remember enough to be useful; I barely can remember those details without my head hurting. My hands go to my head when I try to remember the rest of that day, to remember anything. I cry out as pain like no other slams into my head, and I drop to my knees as they buckle under me.

*Mine. Let me control, and I will save our parents. It was me. It was us.*

“Alexandria!” I hear Egeria shout over the woman’s voice in my head, and it hurts so much to open my eyes. The woman’s voice fades, but her

words seem like they will never leave my mind. What the hell did that voice mean? I don't understand any of this.

"Her demon is fighting her. You know the odds, Egeria," Mr. Bisgaard says in the distance.

"Screw the odds," she harshly snaps back as I feel hands on my shoulders. "You fight your way through this, Alexandria Cameron. Whatever is hidden by your demon, you must let it go for now until you are stronger." I try to follow her words as another voice vibrates in my head; only five words are remotely understandable.

*We belong to only death.* A cry escapes my wet lips as suddenly the room comes back, including the fact I'm on Egeria's lap, and she is stroking my hair. Mr. Bisgaard is by the door, his arms crossed, and his frown turns into a big smile when his eyes meet mine.

"She survived the first contact! Oh, that is good to see!" Mr. Bisgaard states, and I groan as I turn my head and throw up all over his white tiled floor. "They are always sick. I'm going to get my wolf slave to clean this up." Mr. Bisgaard leaves the room as I sit up, and Egeria hands me some tissues from the table before helping me stand up, and we move toward the door, away from where I was sick.

"The transition to becoming your true demon is always difficult. I saw horns and black fingers for a second," she says and smiles at me as I wipe my lips with the tissue. "I'm so proud, and your dad would be too."

"I get the impression you don't like my mother," I say because I don't want to talk about whatever just happened.

"It's not that I don't like her, I just don't like her secretive nature," she says, sinking into the chair behind her, and I rest against the desk, my whole body still shaking as I focus on the story Egeria has decided to tell me. "Your mother and her brother were full-blooded demons left outside a church in West Virginia. There was no note, nothing but a blanket between them to share was left. There are only ten months between your mother and uncle, but they almost look like twins now. I hate that she dragged my son and granddaughter into this secretive life and never asked for my help. I would have and still would do anything for my family, but she never treated me as such. Now I might lose my son because of these secrets," she tells me.

"I love my mum and dad. I know my mum would have only kept secrets to keep us alive," I say.

“What if these secrets were too much for even your mum to hide?” she asks, shaking her head. “Something bad happened, and I never once thought Leo or Irene killed all those people and took their souls. We may be demons, but we respect our own, and most of all, we respect death. The five people killed were close friends of Leo and Irene. They would never have wanted them to lose their souls and die the way they did,” she tells me. It makes me feel a little bit better because finally, someone thinks the same way that I do. My parents did not do this.

“I was seven when we left our home, and I don’t ever remember leaving the house. I was homeschooled until the move and lonely. Really lonely to be honest,” I say, biting on my lip. “I used to play dolls and pretend I had friends and more family. Including a grandmother.”

She smiles at me, a real smile. “They never told a soul about you, and that makes no sense. Can you think of any reason, anything at all, why they would do that?” she asks.

“No,” I honestly tell her.

“One day, you will see I’m not the bad guy and you can trust me. I will be leaving now; I want to go and see my son,” she tells me.

“Can I see him with you? Please?” I ask.

“Witnesses can’t see the accused until after the trial so as not to tamper the evidence you give,” she explains to me, stepping closer as I look down at the floor. For a second, I thought I had a chance of seeing them once again. Turns out that was wrong. “But I will pass along any message you want.”

“Just—” I pause because there is so much I want to say, but I don’t want it to be a passed along message. “Just tell him I love him, and I’m doing well. Don’t tell him about the demon thing and being sick. He will just worry,” I say, and she nods, walking to the door, stepping over the sick. She pauses with her hand on the handle and looks back at me.

“You belong to my family now, and that means if you need help, you only have to ask for me. Call my name into any fire, and I will appear for you. I may live in hell, but there are always ways of contacting Earth,” she tells me.

“I don’t belong to anyone,” I whisper.

“We all belong to one person, Alexandria. His name is Lucifer, and one day you will meet him and bow, pledging your undying allegiance to him before you even realise what you said. All those who meet our king fall to

their knees. You will not be different, Alexandria,” she warns me, her tone much more serious than ever before.

“We will see,” I mutter, and she smiles at me like I’m a sad child who knows nothing. She might be right.



## CHAPTER 13

### WHO WOULD WANT A MONSTER FOR A SOUL MATE?



“You’re back early,” Sera notes as I walk into the apartment, kicking the door shut behind me.

“Mr. Morganach cancelled on me for the weekend. Said he had other things to do and that I should amuse myself,” I explain to her. “Amuse myself? Who does he think he is?”

“Did you actually speak to him, or are you still carrying on with the silent treatment?” she asks with a small smile.

“Silent treatment for the win,” I say, dropping into one of the leather chairs, eyeing Amethyst fast asleep on the other chair. “It’s amusing to see his frustration building every time I never reply when he is talking to me.”

“You do realise dark angels aren’t all holy and can actually kill you?” she warns. I get the feeling he really wants to kill me, but he can’t for whatever reason.

“I know,” I say. “But everything at this academy is trying to kill me. Why not have some fun with it?”

“You’re crazy, that’s all I’m saying,” she replies. I run my gaze to the window, including the wooden planks across the one section that Javier fitted. Luckily, no one but Sera and I come into the apartment, so no one has asked questions about why there is a broken window with panels across it that can be moved so Javier can come back in without breaking anything.

“But you like me,” I say with a chuckle just as someone knocks on the door. Sera walks to the door and opens it as I stand up, seeing Amethyst stretching herself awake in the corner of my eye.

“A gift for Alexandria Cameron,” I hear a man say, but the door angle hides him. “Good day to you both.”

“Who was it?” I ask as Sera closes the door and walks over to me holding a small red box.

“It was a Heller, and he said this is a gift for you. Do you have some secret admirers you need to tell me about?” she asks.

“Doubtful. Every guy I’ve been attracted to in this academy has threatened to kill me. I’m starting to wonder if that is my secret—and quite terrible—flirtatious charm,” I say, and at least Sera laughs. I’m not joking, but okay. Sera hands me the red box that is about the size of an orange, and I undo the bow before pushing it open. A white handwritten note on the shiny red card is resting on top of a necklace, hiding everything but the chain. I pick the note up, reading it out loud.

*For my niece, how I am in deep sorrow that I cannot visit you.  
This gift is a protection charm, straight from the fires of hell. Shall it protect  
your young demon life.  
Your parents’ trial has been moved to three months away, on the count they  
are looking for a lost witness. I am sorry to bring you such news.  
Be careful in the academy.  
Enemies of our family are closer than you could ever know.  
Your uncle,  
Harry Snowen*

“I’M SO sorry about your parents’ trial, Lexi. What did he mean by that comment about the academy?” Sera asks, and I shrug at her as I put the note down to look at the charm necklace in the box. The charm is delicate gold bands like a cage surrounding a glowing and moving red sphere in the middle. I unclip the necklace from the box and hold it up in the light, seeing how incredible it really is. I try not to think about my parents being locked in that place much longer than they need to be. I can’t think about not seeing them for a long time. It’s always been just them and me, and now I can’t even call them to say hello.

I really miss their voices. I miss my mum’s sarcasm and my dad’s cheesy jokes. I even miss their arguments over which film to watch on a

Saturday night.

“I don’t know, Sera,” I answer her.

“I’ve never seen or heard of anything like it before,” Sera comments, her eyes on the necklace.

“It’s beautiful though, right?” I ask.

“Very,” Sera agrees.

“Will you help me put it on?” I ask her, and she nods, carefully taking the necklace from me. I move my hair out of the way, and she clips the necklace on. It falls quite low on my chest, which will make it easy to hide.

“It suits you, Lexi,” she says when she steps back, and I let my hair fall around me.

“Want to go for a walk? I don’t want to stay in the apartment all day,” I suggest.

“Sounds lovely. I saw this garden on the other side of the building. The second years were practicing fencing in it the other day.”

“Fencing?” I muse. “Funny enough, my dad took me to fencing classes every other Sunday since I was a kid. Though it’s not funny if you think about it too long. It was just their way of getting me ready for this place without telling me.”

“Lexi—”

“I’m okay. Let’s go,” I say, walking to the door before she can see my emotions so clearly in my eyes. I don’t want to let her into my head right now; it’s not a nice place to be. Sera follows me out of the apartment and closes the door behind us before moving to walk right in front of me like she always does. Heaven forbid we walk side by side.

“So where do wolf shifters live?” I ask. “As demons are in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean where it’s damn cold.”

“There are over twenty packs in the world. Most live in towns, and they don’t bother anyone. The biggest pack, the one I am from, is in Norway. The entire town is made of little red houses, surrounded by tall mountains and beautiful lakes.”

“It sounds magical. Do you speak Norwegian then?”

“Yes. And French and German. I tried to learn Mandarin, but it’s a hard language, so I gave up. Our pack mostly speak English unless local humans or tourists are around.”

“Look who it is.”

“Hello again,” I mutter, hating a part of me that is happy to see Claus. He leans against the wall, his arms crossed and his hair pulled back in a messy man bun, which only adds to his attraction. He could pull anything off, including the standard uniform he has on.

“Come on in, Alexandria. We won’t bite,” he says, waving a hand at the open door next to him.

“No, thanks,” I reply.

“It’s rude to turn down an invitation, didn’t you know?” he asks, stepping into my personal space and clamping his hand around my arm.

“Then consider me rude and get your hand off me!” I growl, pulling my arm, but it only serves to pull him closer to me, close enough our bodies line up and press against each other. He is warm, so damn warm that I can feel him through our clothes, and it makes me want to sink into him. His lips tilt up as his eyes flash with amusement.

“I don’t think so, darling,” he states, and before I can react, he starts dragging me into the room, kicking the door open. I look back before the door is shut, seeing Sera looking panicked. I shake my head at her, willing her to stay out of it. I need to handle this all on my own.

The room is dimly lit, the two small windows on the wall doing little to shine much light through the blinds. The thick metallic smell of blood drifts to me first, so strong I struggle to not feel sick at the smell. It takes me a few seconds to really take in what is in this room. Five large, tall cages are at the ends of a pentagram that is drawn onto the floor. In each cage, there is a man. Oddly, each one of them is blond and young, reminding me of someone I can’t quite think of. Each of the men has long cuts down their chests and arms, and blood freely pours down their still bodies onto the ground. The sickest thing about it all is Nikoli. He is lying in the middle of the pentagram, blood sticking to his uniform and back, all the way to his hair. His eyes are closed, a smile is on his perfect lips.

“What the fuck is wrong with you both?” I demand, pulling away from Claus, but he is too strong. He pulls my back to his chest, and spins us around, forcing me to watch Nikoli. Claus’s warm breath caresses my ear and cheek as he whispers to me. I hate myself for liking it.

“There is so much wrong with us, darling. What else would you expect from sons of the King of Hell?”

“To be better than he is,” I say, regretting the words the second they leave my lips. Nikoli’s eyes pop open at my words, his head swiftly turning

to me. He slowly sits up; the movement makes me more nervous than anything else he does. Fear makes me breathless as Nikoli stands up, blood dripping onto the floor as he walks to me and almost tenderly places his wet hand on my cheek. His other hand comes up and cups my other cheek as he moves ever so closer. I'm pressed between the Lucifer brothers, completely powerless, completely fearful.

And a fucked-up part of me loves it.

Nikoli's eyes are all I can look at as his hands slide down my cheeks to my throat, and he ever so slightly tightens his grip, his nails digging into my neck. I hold in a cry when his nail cuts a line across the side of my neck; the cut feels small. Something changes the moment my blood drips down my neck, because Claus turns my head to the side at the same time Nikoli does, and both their lips press onto my neck near the cut. I gasp as one of their tongues runs across the cut, and a strange feeling of acceptance and pleasure fills me, making my legs weak.

"You're our mate. You." Nikoli's words are spoken in such wonder and disgust that I'm not sure which one is winning for him.

"No!" I shout, pushing away from them both and backing away to the door. Claus is silent, though his tongue ever so slowly runs across his bottom lip before he smiles at me. A big, very pleased grin.

"We have been waiting for you, darling," Claus tells me, taking a step forward, but I take one back, which makes him frown.

"You are torturing people in here and lying in their blood. You are monsters, and I don't want monsters for mates!"

"Do you really believe you aren't a monster, Alexandria?" Nikoli asks, a cruel laugh following his words.

"If I am, then what the fuck does that make you, Nikoli?" Before he can answer, before I can suffer for saying that, I turn and run out of the room. Sera doesn't say a word; she just runs with me back to our room. *They can't be mine.*

## CHAPTER 14

ANGEL BLESSINGS ARE NOT A NICE AS THEY SOUND



“Oh, there she is. Come here, little demon of mine,” Claus says the moment I step out my door and see him leaning against the statue in the distance, looking ridiculously attractive for this early in the morning. Claus has a black hoodie on, with the DA logo on the arm and a cheeky grin on his lips. Where the hell did he get that hoodie? *I want one.*

And he isn’t alone, much to my distaste.

Plastered to his side is Letitia Lale, acting like butter wouldn’t melt in her mouth as she lovingly looks up to him. I’m one hundred percent sure that Letitia has redesigned her uniform to look even sluttier than it already was. I mean, I can see the bottom of her ass, and her boobs look close to popping out the top. I watch as she strokes a hand down Claus’s chest, and anger fills my emotions, and a buzzing noise hums in my ears. I briefly close my eyes and take a deep breath, pushing back the emotions that I presume come from my demon. They certainly feel demonic.

“No, thank you. I don’t need to throw up my toast before my morning run,” I sarcastically say, trying to walk past them, but Claus steps in front of me, grabbing my shoulders with his large, firm hands. Frustration builds up in me as my plan to ignore Claus and Nikoli for the rest of the year is going up in smoke. I need a new plan, it seems.

“How am I meant to get to know my mate if all she does is run away from me?” he asks with puppy dog eyes.

“I’m not your mate,” I bite out, ignoring how good it feels to have his arm wrapped around my waist.

“Your blood says differently; I can still taste it on my tongue. I know a way we could find out for certain, if you really wish,” he seductively

suggests, and I push him away, which only makes him laugh. He and Letitia follow me as I head down the corridor to the doors, carrying on their conversation like I'm not even here. I wish Sera was with me, but it's her only day off due to the full moon, and even though she hasn't left the apartment yet, she can't be seen with me. The academy is empty of all wolves in their green clothes that make them stand out.

"Did you see that human Nikoli was practising hexes on yesterday?" Letitia asks. "The handsome blond man." I don't know why she bothers describing him; they are all blond and pretty. Claus and Nikoli clearly have a type of men they like to kill. The psychopaths.

"The angel-blessed one?" Claus asks.

"Yes! What a very unlucky thing to be born with. I'd hate to be angel-blessed," she says like it's disgusting to even talk about it.

"It's funny they call it a blessing, if you ask me," Claus replies.

"Anyway, want to go back to my room—"

"No, I have a meeting with Mr. Bisgaard. See you around, Letitia." Claus drops her like a plank of wood, and I look back just once, seeing Letitia glaring at me like this is all my fault. I suppose it likely is. Claus winks at me before disappearing into one of the rooms. Not wanting to be late or be alone with him more than necessary, I quickly head outside, letting the salty, cold air blow against my cheeks. I look up for second as I feel cold drops of rain on my cheeks, and I sigh in the simple relief of the feeling.

"We are practising in the library for the future. This way, Miss Cameron," Mr. Morganach instructs, much to my relief. I blink my eyes open as he passes me, his gaze travelling all over my face until he steps through and carries on walking. I quickly catch up with him as he goes to the sixth door down the corridor and holds it open for me. I head inside to the small spiral stone staircase that is lit up by modern spotlights on the ceiling, and I look back at Mr. Morganach as he pulls the door shut.

"Silent still? So silent you can't ask which way? Up or down?" he asks, crowding my space as he comes closer, so close I can't help but breathe in how he smells.

Which is too flipping sexy and alluring for anyone's good. I raise an eyebrow at him, and he sighs, looking like he really, *really* wants to kill me. I don't know why I keep testing his patience, but I can't help myself.

“I’m sorry for pushing you and not giving you a chance. For fuck’s sake, I told you I’m not a good teacher. What did you expect?” he asks me, looking beyond annoyed that he had to apologise.

“That’s all I wanted,” I say, and he smiles for just a second.

“I’ve never said sorry to anyone in years; you should feel proud that you have frustrated me enough into apologising,” he remarks.

“I’m a little bit proud, Mr. Morganach,” I reply, not able to hide my grin. I almost want to laugh, but I don’t have a death wish. Yet.

“Go up the stairs, Miss Cameron,” he bites out, but there is a hint of a smile on his lips he can’t hide.

“Sure, Mr. Morganach,” I sweetly reply, and I’m sure I hear him growl as I walk up the stairs. That’s something I’d expect Javier to do, and I weirdly like hearing Mr. Morganach so frustrated. The top of the stairs winds around into a big library with tall bookcases in rows, long and thin windows pressed into the gray stone walls.

“Why is it empty in here?” I ask, because it’s a pretty old and cool room. Also, it strikes me odd that no one is reading. I’m super interested in finding a book on the history of demons so I can catch up on everything I am clueless about.

“Not many people like to read these books after one student got sucked into the book, and they haven’t got him out yet,” Mr. Morganach explains to me. “The book then disappeared and likely put itself away somewhere in here. Books are dangerous, Miss Cameron.”

“Holy shit, a book ate a student?”

“They are enchanted books, and there is a price for reading them. Best stick to your Kindle, baby,” he suggests.

“Why are we here, Mr. Morganach?” I ask, wanting to leave the subject of student-eating books behind.

“Training. Do you think I want to spend time with you unless I have to?” he asks and laughs at his joke. “We simply needed a room with obstacles. The bookcases will do that brilliantly.” He starts pulling off his cloak, resting it on a nearby chair. He has nothing more than a thin black shirt on, one that presses against his muscular form, and I try not to drool as he starts rolling his sleeves up. There is something super sexy about watching a guy do that simple action.

“Can I ask you something?” I muse, leaning against the desk, sliding my hands into the pockets of my joggers. He doesn’t say yes, instead he just



looks at me and sighs. I'm taking it as a yes. "Letitia said a human in the hexes class is angel-blessed. She said that was unlucky and made it sound —"

"Terrible?" Mr. Morganach suggests. "Because it is. I was angel-blessed when I was human...and it is nothing but a curse."

"I don't understand; what does it mean?" I ask, slowly taking in the information that he was once human. So angels can be turned?

"An angel blessing is a mark on your body that appears a day after your birth. It simply means you are chosen and blessed by an angel. It also means you will die between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one, and become an angel in training and attend The Angel Academy."

"Wow," I whisper, and Mr. Morganach reaches into his pocket, then pulls out a small white box. He flips the box open, and a small ball of green light floats into the air in the middle of us. It zooms off, brushing past my cheek, and by the time I've spun around, it has disappeared into the library.

"Now, question time is over; we have a lesson to get on with," Mr. Morganach says. "The aim is very simple: you get the orb before I do."

"But—"

"But what, baby? Are you scared of losing?" he asks with an amused smirk.

"I just know you can move super quick," I remark.

"So can you if you start using your demonic powers. You aren't human, Miss Cameron. Stop fucking acting like you are and get your ass moving. It's no fun to play on my own," he tells me.

"You seem like the guy that plays on his own all the time," I reply with a small smile. I know he gets my flirty joke because he narrows his eyes.

"Careful," he warns, walking to my side and looking down at me. "I still want to kill you." He runs off before I can see his expression, but I'm stupidly not scared.

For the first time since I met Mr. Morganach, I think he was lying to me. I run after him only to find him holding the orb in his hand, a downright pissed off expression on his face as he throws the orb into the air.

"At least make it interesting, baby," he suggests, knocking my shoulder as he runs past me, and I run to chase after him.

One day, I'm going to beat him.

*One day.*

## CHAPTER 15

### HAVING A TALKING CAT IS FUN



I sit staring at the doll I've made with string in my first voodoo class, coming to the conclusion that my doll looks more like a man with a giant head and one big foot instead of the basic shape I was aiming for. Knitting is not my jam, unlike most of the other students in here. We don't have a voodoo teacher because she is in hell for a week, but we have Mrs. Herman coming in and out to check on us every so often. I look over at Maggie and Letitia at the desk next to mine, and their dolls are perfect. They are even knitting hair for their dolls now, and strangely Letitia's doll looks just like me. I'm sure it's just my imagination though. I shake my head and look back to see Nikoli sitting on his own, flipping a knife around like the crazy lunatic that he is. His eyes shoot up and crash with mine before I turn back, making him well aware that I was just staring at him. After a few seconds of willing my fast-beating heart to calm down, it spikes up again as Nikoli pulls the seat out next to me and sits down. He doesn't say anything as he picks my doll up, and to my surprise, he laughs.

A real, deep throaty kind of laugh that is contagious as I chuckle a little bit. His eyes meet mine once again; this time, I look at the different colours and how they really are fighting against each other to win.

"Want some help with whatever this is meant to be?" he asks me.

"You want to help me?" I ask, raising an eyebrow.

"Look, we never thought it was possible to find a mate with our mixed blood. You shocked us to our core, and we didn't handle it well," he remarks. "Before that, you were a stranger who attracted me to her, and I

didn't like it. I presumed you were using some fucked-up magic to get my attention."

"I don't want a mate," I tell him. "Sorry, but I don't. Though I am happy to see you being nice to me instead of being a bully."

"Too bad, you have two mates then. And your soon-to-be mate is dying inside a little, watching you knit this doll so epically bad," he says, and I sigh, knowing there is no getting through to him. I might as well at least be his friend and make life easier for me. There is no way he is getting more than a friendship though. He and his muscular arms can think again.

"Are you telling me you can do better?" I ask.

"Hell yeah, I can, Alexandria. Just watch," he says, winking at me before grabbing the string and getting to work. I watch as he swiftly and persuasively makes a doll, never once looking at the instruction manual in the book. In about twenty minutes, he finishes the perfect doll and hands it to me.

"Most guys give girls flowers for gifts," I say, rubbing my thumb across the doll.

"Isn't a voodoo doll a romantic gift?" he asks, frowning. "Now you can torture and control your enemies."

"It's a lovely gift, Nikoli, thanks," I say because I know, in his mind, this is a charming gift.

"I was brought up with humans, you know?" he says, grinning at me. "I know this is a weird as fuck gift in the human world. Chocolate, jewellery, or flowers would have been better."

"We aren't in the human world though," I reply. "And I really appreciate this."

"Want to come to my room after class? We could watch a movie or something?" he asks me. "I want to chill with you." I see the look in his eyes that suggests more than chilling, and roll my eyes at him.

"I have another class," I say, pulling out my schedule from my pocket. "It's familiar hunting or something."

"Oh yeah, I don't attend that class, and neither does Claus. We have a familiar, but we keep him in hell for reasons," he tells me. "We found him on our seventeenth birthday, and he is a bit of a brute."

"What reasons?" I ask.

"He is too big for Earth for one, and the other is that he sets fire to most things he touches. One day I will show you him," he tells me.

“I’d like that,” I reply, knowing I’d actually like to see their familiar.

“I’m sure you will find a cool familiar soon,” he tells me.

“I think I have one. I have a cat called Amethyst, and she is, well, strange,” I mutter.

“Impressive. You must be stronger than you look, Alexandria,” he tells me, and I almost want to correct him about using my nickname, but I like how he calls me Alexandria.

“Why are you being nice today?” I ask.

“Can’t I be nice?” he muses with a smirk.

“No,” I swiftly reply, and he grins, leaning into me and resting his hands on the back of my chair.

“Maybe I’ve decided I want you, Alexandria,” he tells me, and I try not to breathe in his minty smell.

“Like a toy? I don’t belong to you because of this magic mate shit, Nikoli,” I warn him.

“Call me Nick, people close to me do,” he tells me.

“Fine, Nick, you need to realise—” I’m cut off as his lips press onto mine for only a second, and I’m frozen still until he leans back. Before I know what I’m doing, my hand slaps across his face, wiping that smug expression off his lips.

“That hurt,” he tells me as I push my chair back and stand up.

“You shouldn’t have kissed me. I didn’t want you to,” I say, and he catches my arm, tugging me down to his level so I have to meet his eyes. I hear the teacher say it’s the end of class in the background and the whispers of everyone who are no doubt looking at us.

“You’re playing a dangerous game, Lex. I’m starting to see you as a challenge, and I never back down from a challenge,” he warns me.

“I see playing nice didn’t last all too long, Nick,” I say.

“I can be nice,” he purrs, his hand still gripping my arm tight enough that I can’t let go. “When I get what I want.”

“You’ll never get what you want from me while you are playing games and being an utter dickhead,” I say, pulling my hand from his and walking out the classroom, hearing his laugh following me out.

\* \* \*

“WHY ARE you carrying me away from the apartment full of food?” Amethyst asks as I walk through the corridor, passing dozens of people who do their best to stare at Amethyst and me. It’s like they’ve never seen a girl holding a cat tightly to her chest so she doesn’t escape as she walks to class or something. Sera looks back at me, a slightly amused smile flickering at me as Amethyst continues to struggle to escape my grip. Even though it’s her day off, Sera explained the clouds are too thick here to see the full moon, and the teachers came around to suggest all wolves go back to work. We go outside and around the side of the academy before we get to a field where a man is standing with three other students around him.

“Good luck,” Sera whispers to me before going to stand with the other three wolves by the wall.

“I’m going to get wet. Cats do not like water; do you remember that fact?” she protests as I walk over the field. “You are torturing me. Torture, I say!”

“It’s a little rain, get over it,” I hiss at her, and she just tries to escape me again, digging her claws into my arm.

“Miss Cameron?” the man who looks in his late thirties asks, smiling at me through his large-framed glasses. “My name is Mr. Zeta. Welcome to Familiar Studies. As you can see, this is a small class as most choose to study familiars in their rooms rather than actively look for them. Now, who is this?”

“Amethyst, and she is my familiar. At least I think she is,” I explain as she tries to escape once again. I just hold her tighter and awkwardly smile at Mr. Zeta.

“Familiars are animals who never leave your side and would happily die for their owners,” he explains to me, focusing on Amethyst.

“I’d choose myself in a life or death situation. Clearly, you have the wrong cat. You should let me go now!” Amethyst hisses.

“Wow, she is a talker, isn’t she? So much meowing,” he remarks with a laugh.

“She never shuts up, to be honest,” I say, and he laughs like I’m joking. If only he knew I wasn’t.

“I would say this class isn’t needed for you. I’m going to send you back to your room and send over some books for you to read on owning a familiar. I will ask you back to my classroom every four weeks to see what you have learnt,” he tells me.

“Sounds good,” I reply, struggling to hold onto Amethyst.

“Goodbye, Miss Cameron—and Amethyst, of course,” he says, and walks away from me to the other students just as the heavens open, dropping heavy, cold rain down on us. Amethyst jumps out of my arms, hissing like crazy as she soon looks terribly soaked through. I can’t help but laugh at her kitty eyes as she looks like she wants to murder me.

“I will never forget this betrayal,” she hisses at me, but it only makes me laugh more as she runs away and into the academy.

*Who said having a talking cat wasn't fun?*

## CHAPTER 16

### ONE TOWEL. ONE POSSESSIVE DEMON



“How was it?” Sera asks as I slam the door shut behind us both, feeling very bloody annoyed. I storm to the couch and sit down before sinking my head into my hands. I’m sure she heard from outside the gym how well this lesson went, just like all the other lessons in this past month. I’ve been at this school a month, and everyone else just seems to be doing better than I am. I can’t hex because even looking at humans makes me want to be sick. I can’t make my voodoo doll do more than stand on its own when other people have theirs dancing. It doesn’t help that the voodoo and necromancy teachers are still in hell, so I can’t ask for their advice or guidance. Claus and Nikoli have offered to give me private lessons, but only if I’m naked in their room as they “teach” me. Assholes.

“It was embarrassing. So embarrassing,” I explain to her. “He beats me every morning to catch that damn orb in private training, and then for the last three weeks, he has taken pleasure at pinning me down until I give up at every survival basics lesson.”

“Oh Lexi,” she says, somewhat amused as much as she is feeling sorry for me. “Would a cup of tea help? Or hot chocolate?”

“It’s a hot chocolate kind of day, Sera. I’d really love one,” I reply.

“Does it help that the angel is super sexy, so being pinned under him should be a little fun?” she asks as she fills the kettle up.

“No, it doesn’t help,” I mutter. “I’m pretty sure all the girls in the class love to have him pin them down, but I don’t. I need to beat him; I *need* to see that smug smile disappear.”

“He is only smug about you,” she reminds me. “You really get under his skin.”

“You need to get under him, period,” Amethyst interjects, though she looks like she is sleeping on the sofa. The little eavesdropping madam.

“It’s not sexual tension, it’s just tension,” I remind her. I’ve told her this a million times, but she is adamant that it is more than just friendly competition. I’m adamant it is nothing more than him being an annoying pain in my ass.

“Okay, the next time you have a lesson with him, try to remember how everyone thinks it’s sexual tension. I’m sure you will notice something,” she suggests as she mixes milk and hot chocolate powder together while the kettle boils.

“It’s not—”

“I’m a wolf, and I can scent a change in pheromones. Like when someone is sexually attracted to someone else,” she says and chuckles as I sit in silence, not having an answer for that one. Thankfully someone knocks on the door a few times, and before either Sera or I can answer it, it opens and Claus followed by Nikoli and a guy I don’t know, walk in.

“Usually when you knock, you wait for someone to answer the door,” I point out as Sera freezes in what she is doing and comes to my side, bowing her head. I hate how she feels like she has to do that. The other guy with the Lucifer twins is clearly their wolf slave, judging by his clothes and how he keeps his head bowed, his thick brown curly hair hiding his face. I’ve seen him around the academy with the twins but never this close.

“Oh shit, we should do introductions before we go to the party,” Claus says, smoothly jumping over the sofa and landing in front of Sera, surprising me when he holds his hand out for her to shake.

“Wait, what party?” I ask, walking around them as I hear the kettle finish. I pour the hot water into my cup as I keep an eye on Claus.

“I’m Claus, and that dickhead over there is my brother, Nikoli. The silent wolf is Santino Franco. The only time he likes to talk is in his sleep. You are?” Claus ignores my question completely, and Sera looks to me, her wide eyes terrified. I stir my hot chocolate as I carefully watch Claus and try to think of what to say.

“What do you do to the girl, beat her silent?” Nikoli asks. “I didn’t know you had a violent side, Lexi.”

“What?” I splutter. “I don’t—”

“I’m Serafin,” Sera finally speaks, just to stick up for me, I suspect.

“Last name?” Claus asks.



“That’s not important,” she is quick to reply, and it was defensive in a way I haven’t heard Sera speak before.

“It is to us. See, Lexi is our mate, and we want to be sure her slave is from a good line,” Nikoli speaks for the first time, and Sera looks to me, and I can only nod. I doubt they will cause trouble for Sera if they want me on their side. I would only hate them more if they did, so I can’t see the harm in them knowing who she is. They might find out anyway.

“Serafin Lupas,” she answers.

“Holy shit, you’re the alpha’s daughter. No fucking way,” Claus says, looking damn shocked. “Though you do look like the ugly bastard. Kind of. You are prettier.”

“And a friend of mine. Be nice or get the fuck out,” I warn them both.

“Are you going to make us leave, Alexandria?” Nikoli teases.

“If you are threatening her, then yes,” I firmly reply, ignoring his teasing.

“Chill. We don’t believe in the wolf slave laws any more than most the decent people here, but it is what it is. Dad won’t change his mind,” Claus says, breaking the tension. I sip my hot chocolate, flinching a little from the hot water.

“You asked him to change things?” I eventually ask as Sera comes over and stands close to me. Claus jumps on the counter, resting back like he owns the building.

“Claus is always asking to change things,” Nick drones in a bored tone. “I prefer everything as it is. Less chance of a war that could destroy everything that way.”

“Even if hundreds suffer?” I ask.

“Wars kill thousands, if not millions. A few hundred bastards are no price at all to avoid that,” Nick says, and I shake my head.

“Wow, you really are an asshole not only in your behaviour but your beliefs too,” I mutter, and Nick glares at me.

“Okay, we are going very much off topic here and killing the vibe,” Claus says, jumping off the counter, smoothly stepping in front of me and blocking my view of his brother. “There is a party tonight, and we want you to come. It would be good for us to spend time together.”

“I don’t want to party, so thanks, but no thanks,” I say. “You can both leave now.”

“I told you she has a stick stuck up her ass like Morgan,” Nick tells Claus. “No wonder they spend so much time together.”

“Come on, you aren’t old before your time like Mr. Morganach, are you?” Claus turns and asks me. I get the feeling they aren’t going to drop this, no matter how much I tell them I don’t want to go.

“Fine,” I mutter. “I need time to shower and get dressed.”

“We will be fine waiting,” Claus says. “Where is this cat familiar I’ve heard of?”

“She ran off when you got here,” Sera explains as I walk away.

“Shame, I wanted to see her,” I hear Claus say as I shut the door to my bedroom. I quickly shower and blow-dry my hair before straightening it and coming out into my bedroom with just a small towel wrapped around me. I nearly drop the towel as I jump out of my skin when I see Nikoli going through my wardrobe.

“You have no sense of personal space, do you?” I ask, holding the towel tighter and feeling my body flush.

“No,” he plainly replies, and he picks out a small black dress from the wardrobe and walks to the bed, laying it down. “You will wear this,” he commands, never once looking at me as he goes to the door. As he opens it, words escape my lips without me wanting to say them. I just can’t help myself.

“I’m not wearing that. You can’t command me to do what you want. Wear what you want me to. I’m not your possession, and I will never be,” I tell him, and he shuts the door he just opened, turning around and taking three large steps until he is right in front of me. His hands snake around my waist, pulling me against his chest as I grip my towel tightly, not wanting to risk letting go to push him away.

“The second I saw you in that fucking gym, I knew in my soul that you were mine. Wear the dress, Alexandria,” he tells me. A romantic statement mixed in with a threat. Why do I like it so much?

“No,” I reply.

“Why are you testing me on everything?” he asks, a slight growl leaving his lips. For just a second, his eyes glow bright green, but in the next second, it is gone.

“Because, Mr. Lucifer, I won’t be controlled by anyone. I know you are used to getting your own way, but so am I,” I warn him.

“You are going to get yourself killed with that attitude,” he warns me. “And I have a vested interest in keeping you alive, which is proving difficult.”

“At least I know you won’t kill me then. One person off my checklist of suspects,” I try to joke, but Nick doesn’t even crack a little bit of a smile.

“It’s not me you should fear, Lex. If you play the *owned by no one* card in front of my father, I won’t be able to save you. No one will,” he warns me. “He will make sure you suffer worse than you’ve ever suffered before.”

“I need to get dressed,” I say, gulping down the fear that is building in my throat at the idea of meeting their father.

*The flipping devil.*

“Of course,” he replies, letting me go, and I try to make my breathing calm as he heads to the door and pulls it open once again. “Although the sexy towel look suits you.” Somehow he makes me smile with that comment as he closes the door, and I look back at the plain black dress on the bed.

“I don’t belong to anyone,” I whisper the words I keep telling myself, what my dad told me. I have to believe in him, and I do because a deeper part of me knows it’s what feels right.

The only person I belong to is me.

## CHAPTER 17

### ONE BEAUTIFUL MATE



CLAUS

The door of Lexi's bedroom opens, and we all turn to look as she walks out in a tight, pure white dress that showcases her amazing figure, hugging her curves to perfection.

"You chose that for her to wear? Good fucking job, everyone is going to be eating her up tonight," I harshly whisper to Nikoli as I walk past him and stop in front of Lexi. She looks up at me with those innocent, pale crystal-blue doe eyes, and she parts her lips to talk. "Are you ready to leave?" I ask her before she can say anything to try and get out of it.

"Sure," she says, and I offer my arm out for her to hook hers through. To my surprise, she hooks her arm with mine, and Nikoli storms to the door, pulling it open and storming out. What pissed him off?

"Was that your doing?" I ask, waving a hand in the direction of the open doorway.

"Might have been. I didn't wear the dress he wanted me to," she explains to me. Ah, now it makes sense.

"Why didn't you?" I ask her, though I suspect the answer is simple. She didn't want to. I like how she resists being told what to do. I like how wild she is, how untameable she can come across as.

"Because I don't like to do as I'm told," she honestly replies. She is too honest for a demon, and I have no fucking idea why I like it so much. Well, I have an idea, being that she is my mate. The perfect person for me, one

who will test me and make me want to jump in front of a bullet for her all at the same time. She is certainly doing the “test me” part of that explanation. “Where is the party then?” she asks, though she glances back to see her wolf slave, Sera, close the door behind us. We follow a moody Nick to the statue of our father, where he stops in front of it and crosses his arms as he waits for us to get to him. His eyes flicker to where Lexi and I are touching with our arms before he hides the look altogether. Big brother is a little bit jelly by the looks of it. We’ve always shared everything, but this time, it is a little different than sharing a toy.

Especially because this girl doesn’t seem to want us at all.

“Watch and see, darling,” I tell her and nod at Nick. He places his hand on the head of the statue, closing his eyes and muttering the words needed to open the portal. Red light blasts out of the statue, and the next second, we are standing on the sand on a sunny beach as the sun sets in the distance. It casts pink and orange hues of light over Lexi’s hair and face, making her seem so perfect that it is hard to even look at her. She is beautiful—a real kind of beauty that you don’t find much in this world of fakes anymore.

Everything about her is real. From her feelings to her friendships, to every smile on her lips. She isn’t trying to impress anyone, least of all me and my brother. It reminds me of my foster parents and everyone back in our childhood. It reminds me of home.

“Where are we?”

“Somewhere in California, I think. Maggie chose the place this time,” I tell her, and her eyes widen in shock. Such innocence, it’s addictive. I remember when I first saw her in the courtroom, though she didn’t see me. She stood tall in front of all the demon leaders, even though her world had been rocked to its core and her parents were locked up. She was brave and fearless. Possibly even reckless in the way she stood up to the leaders and asked to see her parents.

When I heard she knocked out a Heller by simply surprising him, I was damn half in love with her. I had to talk to her, even if it cost me risking my cover by telling her my name. Nothing mattered but meeting her.

I should have known she was my mate right then. I’d never risk a mission from my father to talk to a girl.

But she isn’t any girl.

“I’m getting a drink. Don’t lose her,” Nick tells me before stomping off across the beach. I look around us, seeing a group of students dancing to

some music on the sand.

“Take your shoes off and come dance with me,” I tell her, and she shakes her head.

“No, even though you didn’t ask and demanded something.”

“Fine. Please, will you dance with me, Alexandria Cameron? My heart can’t take the idea of dancing without you.”

She tries not to smile, but she fails, and I find I really fucking like how she smiles. It lights up her whole face, makes her even prettier than before. I kick my shoes off and pull my socks off, shoving them in my shoes as she slides her shoes off in a more graceful way. I grab her hand, linking our fingers, which I expect her to pull away from, but she doesn’t. I tug her into the dancers, wrapping my arms around her waist and pull her into me, enjoying the sharp intake of breath I hear her make.

I do affect her, even if she wants to deny it. I rest my head next to hers as I take control of the dance, swaying us to the music and breathing in how she smells of vanilla and peaches. I fucking love peaches. I pull back to look at her, finding her eyes so wide as she stares up at me, her small hands resting on the back of my neck, occasionally touching my hair.

“I—”

“Claus!” Letitia practically shouts down my ear, knocking into us and breaking my grip on Lexi so she steps out of the way, and Letitia takes her place. I push Letitia’s hands away and step around her, taking Lexi’s hand. She smiles up at me, looking surprised, but I don’t know why she is. Letitia is an ex-girlfriend who dated both Nikoli and me, but it wasn’t serious, and it didn’t last more than a couple weeks because she is extremely clingy. And the sheer fact is she isn’t our mate.

Alexandria Cameron is. Even if she never wants us like that, we will never be with anyone else. I fucking knew the moment I tasted her blood. Lexi might not understand the mating draw or anything to do with mating in general, but Letitia does, so I don’t get why she is getting in the way.

“Lexi, I didn’t think parties were your thing, or I would have invited you myself,” Letitia sweetly says. Utter bullshit.

“Parties are my thing, actually,” she is quick to reply.

“How about party games? I was just going to start a challenge! Want to play?” Letitia asks, almost teasing her.

“Yes,” Lexi says before I can tell her that’s a very bad idea.

“Woo! Get the drinks ready!” Letitia shouts and grabs Lexi’s hand, dragging her away from me. In a matter of moments, a table and two chairs appear, followed by a glowing green bottle and two shot glasses.

“This is really fucking bad. Why didn’t you stop her?” Nick asks, coming to my side. He downs his own drink before chucking the cup in a bin nearby.

“Didn’t have a chance,” I explain to him.

“She is too stubborn to back down, dumbass,” Nick tells me what I already know. Shit. Lexi frowns as Letitia gets one of her classmates to pour two glasses.

“The first one to refuse a drink loses,” Letitia declares.

“If I win this, will you leave me the fuck alone?” Lexi demands. Smart girl, make it worth it.

“Sure. If I win, you have to let me test my voodoo doll on you,” Letitia replies. Oh shit.

“No—”

“Deal,” Lexi says, both of them ignoring me as they cut me off. Fucking hell, she needs to win now. Nick just groans as Lexi and Letitia down the first drink, and Lexi coughs a few times, but Letitia doesn’t. The crazy bitch has been downing this demon magic drink since she was ten. Or so the rumours say.

“She is going to lose,” Nick grumbles.

“Not if we support her,” I mutter to him. “Go, Lexi! You can do this!” I shout at her, and a few people start cheering for her with me. Seven shots later, Lexi is swaying a little in her seat, and even Letitia is looking a bit pale. By twelve shots, it’s a wonder either of them is still sitting upright. Fifteen shots in and they are both shaking with bloodshot eyes and struggling to pick up the sixteenth shot. Everyone is cheering their names, including both Nikoli and me. We all tensely watch as they both pick up the sixteenth shot, and at the same time, they both start falling out of the chair, their eyes closing. Letitia hits the sand first as Lexi manages to straighten herself up for a moment before collapsing. The crowd cheers as Nick and I run to Lexi, and Nick picks her up. I chuckle as she wraps her arms around him and starts kissing his neck, whispering things I can’t hear until we get out of the crowd.

“You two are hot assholes. Not the kind of hot assholes you get after eating curry, but the kind you find in strip clubs. That kind of hot asshole,”

she slurs.

“Glad you clarified what kind of assholes we are, Lexi,” I mutter, trying not to laugh as we get to the portal. She soon passes out, resting her head against Nikoli’s chest.

“We should take her to our room in case she gets ill. I’m sure her demon healing will kick in, but I don’t want to risk it,” Nick comments, his tone thick with protectiveness. Almost like he can’t stand the idea of having her out of his sight. I feel the same, but man, I didn’t expect that from Nick.

“Careful, Nick. Sounds like you care,” I say, and he narrows his eyes at me. I smartly shut up because I want nothing more than to take our mate back to our room, even if it is to look after her.

“Open the fucking portal before she is sick on me.” I chuckle at my brother’s comment as I do just that.



## CHAPTER 18

### A LITTLE BIT HUNGOVER AND ONE MAD ANGEL



Everything hurts as I open my eyes, especially my head, and I blink a few times, wondering why my bed is so warm and the blanket is so heavy. It takes less than a few seconds for me to realise the blanket has two arms above it, wrapped around my stomach and there are people on either side of me. I'm cocooned in warmth to the point I don't want to move, that is until my brain seems to clock the fact I'm not in bed alone. Or my bed at all. I turn my head to the left, seeing Claus fast asleep at my side. I'm somewhat relieved it's him, though I don't remember how I got into his bed. I turn to the right to slide out of bed only to see Nick on my other side, though he is awake and looking far too smug. His swirly green and purple eyes remind me of lavender growing in the fields behind the church back home. The mix of purple and green is so pretty in the morning light.

"How did I get in this bed with you two?" I demand, my voice croaking, and my throat damn well hurts. I feel terrible...in fact, worse than terrible.

"You weren't making good choices last night, so we stepped in around the time you told us, and I'm quoting you here, 'You two are hot assholes. Not the kind of hot assholes you get after eating curry, but the kind you find in strip clubs. That kind of hot asshole.' "

"I did not say that," I say, feeling horrid as I sit up, pushing Claus's arm off me as little flashes of last night appear into my head. Dancing with Claus, loving it, and then drinking with Letitia.

"You did," Claus mutters as he sits up, and the blanket falls down his chest in almost slow motion. Or at least my eyes sure do make it seem like

that. I gulp at the ripples of muscles on his chest and the shiny six-pack just there.

“Wait, did I win the drinking game?” I ask, praying that I did, because I do not remember. Whatever that drink was, it was nasty and strong.

“Yes, you did, you crazy girl,” Nick mutters.

I shake my head and climb out of the bed, freezing when I see the clock that says it is six thirty in the morning.

“Shit, shit, shit. Mr. Morganach is going to kill me,” I mutter, picking my shoes up off the floor and sliding them on.

“Such foul language in the morning,” Nick mutters with a groan. “Will you be quiet and come back to bed?” I ignore them both, picking up Claus’s hoodie off the chair in the corner of the room and looking back to ask if I can borrow it, but the twins are lying back down, facing away from each other as they have gone back to sleep. Such assholes. I’m totally stealing their hoodie. I pull it on, doing up the zipper before leaving. I run out of the bedroom, passing Santino in the kitchen, who I see wave as I pull the door open. I race down the corridor after slamming the door behind me and get to the stairs, looking down to see I’m three floors up. Crap, I’m going to be so late. I don’t know how long it takes me to run down all the stairs but I need to be quicker. I run as fast as I can, almost missing the door as I get to it and pull it open. I run up the steps and get to the top, where Mr. Morganach is still as he stands right in front of me.

“I’m so sorry I’m late. I messed up,” I admit to him, walking around his slightly stretched black wings to meet his gaze. His eyes look like the death of everything in the world as he moves toward me in one swift motion, grabbing the top of my arms tightly and lifting me off the ground.

“Tell me why I shouldn’t kill you,” he asks me, almost calmly. I know him well enough to realise he is always calm. Always. Even when he is angry and pissed off. I bet he is even calm when someone he loves dies. It is just who he is on the outside all of the time. The inside? Not so calm. More like a storm on fire with flying trucks in it.

“Because being late isn’t a death penalty,” I nervously suggest.

“I’m done with you. I’m fucking done.” He angrily drops me to the ground, and I cry out as I land awkwardly on my arm, feeling shooting pain down it. I roll to my side, lifting myself up as tears prick my eyes when I lift my arm to my lap. To my surprise, Mr. Morganach is leaning down, and his fingers gently pick up my arm, pushing my hoodie up even though it

hurts. He strokes my arm, pausing near my elbow when I can't hold in the little cries escaping my lips. He sucks in a deep breath and rests my arm back on my lap before walking away to the back of the library. I just watch him go, expecting him to leave me and fly out of the window or something, but instead he comes back with a black wooden box. He sits opposite me and opens the box at his side which holds four different coloured liquids in glass vials. He picks the red vial and pops it open before handing it to me. I use my arm which isn't sore to take the vial from him, holding it as I'm not sure what I'm meant to do with it.

"Drink it," he explains, and I do as I'm told, coughing as the thick liquid burns my throat. He takes the vial from me and closes the box. We sit in silence like this, and it's strangely comfortable between us.

"I'm sorry," I tell him. "I didn't mean to sleep in."

"I'm sorry for hurting you. I honestly don't know who I am sometimes," he mutters. "My parents, my brother...they would all be fucking disappointed in the monster I am."

"You're Mr. Morganach, and yes, you have anger issues, but I don't think you are a monster—wait, what is your first name?" I ask him.

"Austin, but call me Morgan. Everyone does," he tells me, and I'm utterly shocked he is opening up to me.

"Careful now, I might start to think we are becoming friends," I warn him.

"We are a long way off that, Miss Cameron," he replies with a small amused smile.

"Lexi," I correct him, and he smiles at me. A real smile that just makes me like him a tiny bit. Only a tiny bit. I also jump away when his hand comes down on my leg, where my dress has risen up my leg and thigh, revealing the birthmark I was told to hide.

"Is this—" he stops, standing up and moving away from me. "You are not possible."

"It's just a birthmark," I apprehensively say.

"How long have you had it?" he asks me, crouching down in front of me this time and offering his hands out to help me up. Considering my arm hurts quite a bit, I let him help me before stepping away. He just steps closer once again.

"Since forever. My dad told me not to show it to anyone; why is it important?" I ask. "You aren't going to tell anyone are you? Please don't. I

promised my dad.”

“That is an angel blessing, Lexi,” he tells me. “And I won’t tell anyone. You have my word.”

“Thank you. So I’m going to die soon? And become like you?” I ask with wide eyes. “I don’t want that. Can you get rid of it?”

“See, the thing is, you are a demon, Lexi. You can’t become an angel; only humans can do that when they die with that mark and are born again in heaven,” he explains to me. “But if you died, your soul belongs to Lucifer and hell. It can’t belong to heaven and hell. It’s impossible in every sense.”

“So I’m not going to die?” I question. “I’m confused.”

“I don’t know. I need to speak to my old professor about this, with your permission, of course. He is a good angel and the only person in the world I trust completely,” he tells me, and I can only nod. I want answers, and I trust Morgan, even though I shouldn’t. “But, baby, your dad was right. You must not show that mark to anyone.”

“Why?” I ask.

“Because it makes you different, Lexi. Different in a fucked-up world that already has your parents locked up,” he tells me. “Promise me you won’t show it to anyone. No one.”

“Okay, got it. I won’t show anyone it,” I reply, not that I planned to. I wasn’t going to show him, but it was an accident.

“It means more than what I told you,” he explains to me. “But that isn’t important at the moment. I can see you look freaked out enough.”

“I’m not the only one looking and acting freaked out, Morgan,” I muse.

“Yeah...” he mutters, though he clearly has his mind somewhere else.

“Can I go back to my room?” I ask him, and he nods, though he isn’t looking at me. I walk to the door, and his voice makes me pause.

“I’m not going easy on you because of today. If anything, you need to be better and stronger than you currently are if you are going to survive,” he warns me. “I need you to survive.”

“Do you want me to survive?” I ask him, though I don’t look back, only hearing my heart beating in my chest. I shouldn’t have asked that.

“To my own surprise, yes,” he tells me, and his voice sounds as astounded as I feel hearing him say that. “Don’t make me regret it, Miss Cameron.”

“I won’t,” I answer before heading down the stairs. It’s a quiet walk back to my apartment, and I open the door, finding Sera and Javier in the

kitchen as I shut it behind me.

“Are you okay?” Sera asks me, rushing over. “I got worried as you didn’t come back last night. Santino told me the twins took you back to theirs because you drank too much.”

“Yep, didn’t realise they have magic drinks here, and I’m okay,” I tell her, and she sighs in relief. “Did you have a good night?”

“I just chilled and watched some soaps. I can’t wait to tell you what happened in EastEnders.” I grin at her, wanting to know, but she changes the subject. “Did you go to your private lesson?” she asks.

“Yes and no. I’ll explain later when we are alone,” I say, seeing Javier listening in as he sits on the counter, this time thankfully wearing clothes. “Hey, Javier.”

“Want to watch a movie with us?” he asks, and I look to Sera, who seems as surprised as I am. I carefully eye Javier, wondering if this is his twin with a much better attitude or something. He only smirks back, his eyes fixed on me, and I see as his gaze drifts to my hoodie and back to my eyes. I imagine he can scent Claus or Nikoli on the clothing.

“Sure. What are we watching?” I ask.

“Javier is a massive Adam Sandler fan, and there is this new detective movie he made with Jennifer Aniston. It looks good,” Sera replies. “I made toffee popcorn for us to share.”

“I wanted to watch that, it sounds lovely. Give me a few minutes to get changed,” I say, placing my hand on Sera’s arm before walking away. I look back to see Javier watching me, his calculating eyes no doubt thinking up a load of trouble.

“The dog is back,” Amethyst says as I go into my room and shut the door. “And you are a dirty stop out. Then again, you are a teenager.”

“Sera is also a wolf, and you are rude,” I tell her. “And going to a party isn’t a crime, Amethyst.”

“Sera doesn’t smell so bad,” she huffs, lifting a paw and licking it.

“I don’t think he smells,” I reply, because he actually doesn’t. Both he and Sera smell like a forest with an undertone of something I can’t quite place.

“That’s because you like him and his sexy abs,” she replies, stretching out and heading to the door. “Maybe sexy abs will let me sit on his lap, and then you can be jealous.” She pulls the door open with her paw and heads out, her tail sliding across the door.

Cats be crazy. That's all I'm saying about this.

## CHAPTER 19

SOMETIMES CRAZY CAN LOOK PRETTY NORMAL



“Guess what?” Sera asks as I sit down at the counter, resting my head on the table as I try not to yawn.

“What?” I ask, smelling something amazing cooking in the oven that I bet is a chicken hot pot, which happens to be a speciality of Sera and her cooking skills. She pushes a plate of toast and various fruits in a bowl toward me as I sit up before she answers.

“A note came that said your necromancy teacher is back, and your first lesson is today in about half an hour!” she says excitedly. “Aren’t you excited?”

“Not exactly, to be honest,” I admit. “Other than the one time in the headmaster’s office and in my first class in voodoo, I’ve had not one bit of demon power to show. I’m failing at everything, and I’ve seen what happens to students that fail.”

“Santino and I were talking in the kitchens—”

“Santino and you?” I suggestively say, and her red cheeks suggest I’m on to something as she carries on talking, ignoring my comment.

“He said no one fully transforms into their demon form until year one or two. He said that the headmaster was bragging about how quickly you almost transformed in his office...before you threw up,” she says, and my cheeks redden. That was embarrassing.

“So maybe they won’t kill me that quickly then. I’m just frustrated with myself,” I admit to her. I feel like something is holding me back since that time in the office. I haven’t even heard that woman’s voice since then. I don’t know what has changed.

“How was training this morning?” she asks.

“Bad and bad. I didn’t get the orb, and Morgan is being more of an ass than before. It’s almost teasing now,” I admit.

“Morgan? You even have a nickname for him now!” she cheerily says, and I rapidly change the subject.

“What about you and Santino? Don’t think I missed your blushed cheeks,” I point out.

“It can’t be anything, and we both know it. We are slaves, and slaves are not permitted to be in love or have children. One of the first things they do when they take us as a slave is force us to take a medicine to make us infertile and unable to reproduce,” she says, turning around and starting washing up. I put the toast in my hand back down on my plate and get off my seat, walking around the table and wrapping my arms around her waist. She pauses in shock as I hug her before she hugs me back.

“I’m so, so sorry they did that to you,” I tell her. “The assholes deserve to rot in hell for that.”

“It’s in the past,” she whispers to me.

“It doesn’t mean it still doesn’t hurt you, Sera. If you ever want to talk it out or anything, I’m here,” I tell her.

“You’re a good friend, Lexi,” she whispers to me.

“That means a lot. I think you’re the first person to call me their friend,” I admit.

“Other people are stupid then,” she says, and we both chuckle. “But you need to get ready for class. You don’t want to be late.”

“Yep, on it. Wish me luck!” I say, rushing into my room and grabbing my clothes. I quickly change and leave my hair down before heading back into the main part of the apartment, seeing Amethyst slithering around Sera’s legs as she meows at her.

“Wolfdog, feed me. I need you to pay attention to me, or I’m going to have to cough up a hairball in your shoe again,” Amethyst warns. *Sometimes I wish I couldn’t hear her.*

“One second, Amethyst. Your food is warming up in the microwave,” Sera sweetly says, leaning down and fussing the evil cat. If only Sera could understand what she was saying.

“Good wolfdog. I shall throw my hairball up in the hallway for you to find as usual.” I blank out the rest of Amethyst’s insane mumbling as I wait for Sera to feed Amethyst and then come to me. She heads out the door first, and I follow behind her down the corridor.



“Oh look, it’s Lexi going to necromancy. Funny, considering her murderous parents likely have some bodies she could practice on if she asked them nicely,” Letitia says rather loudly so everyone can hear. Sera’s eyes widen at me, but I shake my head before facing Letitia.

“Or I could kill you and see if your bitchiness carries on throughout death, Letitia?” I suggest, stopping in front of her. Maggie crosses her arms, raising an eyebrow at me, but Letitia is silent as I walk right up to her face. Bullies don’t like being challenged. It’s something my mum always said. “Stay out of my way and stop being a petty, jealous cow, Letitia.”

“I’m not jealous or petty!” she protests back.

“Then why are you so interested in me?” I ask, stepping a little closer. “Because if you like girls and I’m your type, I’m sorry to burst your bubble, but I don’t like you that way. Or at all, while we are on the subject.”

“I d-don’t like girls. I mean, I love Claus, so—” she stops, clamping her hand over her mouth.

“He isn’t your mate, Letitia. We have talked about this,” Maggie gently says to her as the three other girls just giggle to themselves, walking away. Letitia shoves Maggie’s hand off her arm and glares at her.

“Says you who stalks Mr. Morganach just for a tiny hope he will actually speak to you. Talk about hopeless and desperate,” she hisses at her best friend. And everyone hears it.

“At least I’m not desperate enough—”

I walk away, not that either of them notices as they carry on shouting at each other, and Sera grins at me.

“That’s how you stick up for yourself. I’m super proud,” she admits.

“Really? I feel like I’m going to puke. I was scared,” I admit to her, and she chuckles before moving in front of me as other students and wolves start to pass us in the corridor. The necromancy room is right at the front of the building, and I head inside as Sera waits for me. I’m not surprised to see a dead body on the desk at the front of the room, but I’m ever so thankful his eyes are closed. He looks in his eighties, only his head is sticking out from a white sheet hanging over him, and his skin is a ghostly white colour. To my surprise though, the room only smells of roses instead of the decaying human. Someone must have sprayed him with rose-scented Febreze or something.

“Ah, Miss Cameron?” a woman in a white lab coat over a purple jumper and jeans asks as she comes up to me. Her long blonde hair is up in a high

ponytail, pulled ever so tightly, and there isn't a single hair out of place. Her eyes remind me of chocolate; they are such a deep brown. She offers me her hand to shake, and I look at the body and back to her hand, undecided if I should touch her hand as she likely brought that body in here. "Oh, I washed my hands. We might be demons, but we aren't barbaric."

Says the woman that has a dead body on her desk in her classroom.

Alright then.

I gulp as I shake her hand, and she smiles sweetly. "My name is Mrs. Friis, and as you can guess, I am an expert at necromancy."

"Lovely to meet you," I tell her, though I'm pretty sure she is one biscuit short of the full tin from her smile alone.

"And you! I went to DA with your mother and father back in the day, and oh how you are the image of them both. I want you to know that I'm personally not ever going to give up on you. You know, for their sakes. You will bring back the dead and make them do whatever you wish if my life depends on it!"

"That's definitely something to hope for," I try to say with as much enthusiasm as she has. Thankfully, she doesn't seem to notice my total nervous disgust at the idea of waking the dead and forcing them to do what I want. Who the hell would hope for that?

"Go and sit down! Class is about to start!" she says in an overly cheery way. She reminds me of those bubbly people I used to see on the bus to school at seven in the morning. I never understood how anyone could be that bubbly and happy, especially at that time in the morning. I walk past three rows of students, who all look at me briefly before settling their gaze down, and I find a seat on the fourth row, where no one else is. I recognise a few of the students from my other classes but none whom I've actually spoken to. I kinda wish Lela was in this class, even though I'm not sure if we are friends or not. Either way, she is nicer than the rest of the students here.

"So class, do any of you know the single spell to bring back the dead?" Mrs. Friis asks us, and there is silence for a reply. "Well, has no other teacher taught it to you?"

"No, miss," a guy near the front answers for everyone.

"Do I have a volunteer to do the spell?" she asks, and again there is silence. I try to hide, but Mrs. Friis isn't having any of that. She points at

me and curls her finger for me to come up front. I try not to look at the body as I slide out of my seat and walk down the gap to Mrs. Friis.

“Brilliant. At least one of you are brave enough to go first,” she says, and there are a few mumbles from the other students. She really isn’t making me look good here. Mrs. Friis places her hand on my shoulder and offers me a small piece of parchment. I unroll it, seeing words I don’t recognise or have a clue how to pronounce.

“If you stare long enough, they will turn into English. You must let your demon show you, Miss Cameron,” she tells me, moving just behind me and resting both her hands on my shoulder. “Silence in the room!” Not that there was anything other than mumbles from the other students anyway. I gulp and stare down at the paper, willing to see anything but the words that make no sense. At first, there is nothing but paper, and then something changes. My hands change, turning black at the ends, and my nails stretch out, ending in pointy tips. The room becomes hazy and cold as the words on the paper change into a sentence I can definitely read.

“I summon the dead to hear my call. I summon hell to send me back this soul. I summon hell to bring back the dead to heed my command, for I am the master of death. For I am born in the flames of hell, and death is my tool. I summon this dead to heed my call.”

I scream and jump back as the body on the table sits up, the white sheet dropping to his stomach. He stays still, just sitting as Mrs. Friis starts jumping up and down in the air at my side.

“Brilliant. Brilliant. Brilliant! Aren’t you just brilliant!” she exclaims with the excitement of a five-year-old at Christmas. The dead guy falls back onto the desk with a loud thud, and Mrs. Friis smiles at me.

“Don’t worry. The problem with necromancy is that you have to practice it again and again before you can command them to do anything but exist,” she muses.

“Okay,” I mutter.

“Anyone could do that! The new girl isn’t special!” the guy that spoke earlier exclaims, standing up and crossing his arms. “Let me have a go!”

“Of course! Come here,” Mrs. Friis says with a happy giggle. The guy walks right up to her and leans down to pick the parchment up off the floor. In one swift motion, Mrs. Friis summons a dagger out of nowhere and slams it into the heart of the guy, and he falls to the ground, silently dying in moments.

“Now, who wants to bring this guy back?” Mrs. Friis excitedly asks as I carefully walk back to my seat, knowing this teacher is likely the most dangerous of them all.

Maybe we were all better off when she was in hell.

She definitely deserves to go there, the crazy cow.

## CHAPTER 20

TEASE ME ONCE, FOOL ON YOU. TEASE ME TWICE, FOOL ON  
ME



“Javier got you these. I don’t know why he decided to bring them for you, but I promised to give them to you, so here,” Sera mumbles as I come out of my room, finding her waiting for me with a small woven box. I open the box still in her hand and find a basket full of little cakes.

“Why would he send me cakes?” I ask, though I don’t mind that he has. I’ve noticed Javier isn’t all that bad from our movie nights with Sera. He always lets me and Sera eat first. He helps Sera wash up the plates, and he knows all sorts of random bits of information for Sera’s multiple questions throughout each movie.

“Giving homemade food to another is a sign of friendship with wolves. It’s a sign of thankfulness and respect,” she explains to me. “Some males cook for months for the female they think is their mate before actually telling them.”

“And you think he made these?” I ask, trying to ignore the mating thing. I think Sera just said it randomly, and she definitely doesn’t know the thoughts that go through my messed-up head about her seriously attractive brother.

“I know he did. Javier is a good cook,” she explains to me, her eyes holding in something I know she wants to say. I shrug and take a cake as I head off to my lesson with Morgan. I take a deep bite of the orange and chocolate cake, and I nearly moan out loud. Man, these taste seriously good. I pause and go back to Sera, who is heading for the kitchen, and grab two more cakes.

“I’m going to give one to Morgan and eat two on the way,” I explain to her around a mouthful of cake. She just chuckles at me as I turn around and head out of the apartment. I take my time walking to the library as I eat my cakes and find a bin for the wrappers on the way. Morgan is leaning against the window as I come into the library, nearly taking my breath away. The rising sun casts orange and yellow beams of light over his body, almost framing him in light. It makes every bit of Morgan seem a little softer than the tough guy I’ve grown to like to dislike.

“Morning, Miss Cameron,” Morgan says, noticing me even though I didn’t move for the last few minutes as I stared. I wonder if he always knew I was there.

“I brought you a homemade cake. It’s orange and chocolate and really good,” I say, offering it to him.

“How do I know it’s not poisoned?” he enquires. “It would be a good way for you to win the prize.”

“I’m not crazy, that’s how you know it’s not poisoned,” I say, and he raises an eyebrow at me. “I also want to win on my own terms and not by cheating,” I add.

“At this point, I’d be happy you won in any way. This lesson is getting boring,” he says, and I frown as he takes the cake from me and sniffs it. Gosh, he’s ungrateful. I really want to shove the cake into his face.

“I want the cake back. You don’t deserve it,” I say, going to snatch the cake back, but he moves out the way and takes a bite of the cake.

“You don’t take gifts back. It’s rude,” he tells me.

“I hope you choke on it,” I say, and he only laughs, walking away and finishing off the cake. That is the last time I share food with him.

“Let’s start this again then,” he says in a bored tone, chucking the wrapper into a bin across the room, and of course it lands perfectly inside. Morgan gets the orb out and throws it behind him, where it disappears. I’m running after it down the aisle of the bookshelves before it disappears from my view. I spin around a bookcase and see it at the end, floating in the air. I gasp as Morgan catches me around the waist, stopping me by a wall. The lights are so dim at the back of the library that every sense is heightened and the prize just looks that much more inviting being so bright.

“Tut, tut. You aren’t fast enough, baby,” he whispers into my ear, his hot breath making my whole body shiver. I suck in a deep breath and push off the wall, only to find he has disappeared again. I search around in the dim

room, my breaths sounding harsher and longer with every second until I see the prize flash in the corner of the room. I run as fast as I can, my hair whipping behind me, and my legs aching from the movement as I push myself further than usual. I'm inches away from the prize when he grabs me around the waist, pulling me against his chest, and I sharply turn my head to the side to look up at him. Even in the dark, I can see the smugness in his eyes. "I won."

"You never gave me a chance," I protest.

"No one ever will, baby. You need to learn that sooner rather than later," he tells me, a smirk lifting the corner of his lips.

"Stop calling me baby," I demand.

"Win the prize for once in your goddamn life and maybe I will," he replies, leaning down closer so his minty breath blows across my lips. "Baby." The word leaves his lips in such a seductive manner that I almost ignore the teasing.

"For a teacher and an angel, you are a flipping tease. You know that?"

"Who said I am teasing?" he asks, letting me go, and I nearly fall over as I straighten up. The lights blast on in the room, forcing me to close my eyes, and when I open them, I'm alone. What the hell did he mean by that?

## CHAPTER 21

### ANGELS, DEMONS, AND LOVE ISLAND



“So do explain to me why he is leaving her?” Amethyst asks as we sit watching Love Island on the laptop in my room. I don’t really like it, but Amethyst is addicted to it, and she won’t watch it alone because she is a pain like that. Not that she can get the laptop open and use her paws to get the shows on for her.

I’m pretty sure, if she could, she would. I pull the page over in the book I’m reading, my eyes drawn to the painting on the one side of an angel with white wings wrapped around a woman with long dark hair, though her face is hidden in his chest. I move my eyes to the writing, though there isn’t much of it on this page. It is meant to be the history of hell and heaven, but like every book I’ve gotten out so far, it is nothing but vague sayings and painting of angels and demons. It’s like someone doesn’t want anyone to know about the past.

*Angels are forbidden to enter hell, let alone fall for the firstborn daughter of hell: Lilith. Lucifer, first of his name, did not heed the rules. Love is forbidden, but it did not stop a romance which would last many years. Thousands upon thousands died in the war their love created, and until the day their children were born, their love was perfect.*

“I WASN’T WATCHING, who left who?” I ask, getting to the end of the small amount of writing. I flip through the rest of the book, finding one more passage right at the end.



*Lucifer was cursed to never walk on Earth or heaven ever again.  
The curse is limited to only one counter.  
When Lucifer finds his mate, he may walk wherever she walks.  
Be it heaven, hell, or Earth.  
Many suspect Lilith was his mate, for his deep love for her lasted so long.  
Lilith was cursed to never enter heaven or hell again after—*

I RUB my finger over the smudge in the ink, but I can't make out the final two sentences. Poor Claus and Nikoli, whose parents caused so much pain. If they were brought up in foster care like everyone says, then there is no way Lilith was bringing them up. I really want to ask them about their parents, but I don't know how to bring it up. It feels more like a girlfriend question, which is difficult when I am trying to keep us as just friends. Something neither of them seems to understand.

"Oh, never mind. This show breaks my heart. They are fools," Amethyst protests.

"But you still watch it every week," I remind her.

"Doesn't mean I don't want to know what happens next, Lexi," she chastises me, and I roll my eyes at her.

"I'm going to get something to drink," I tell her.

"If you find the catnip Sera is hiding from me, I wish for you to bring it back," she tells me.

"She hid it because it's a treat and you are addicted," I remind her.

"Remind me why I like you again?" she asks overdramatically, and I don't bother answering that one as I leave my room and head to the kitchen where there are some dim lights on. I pull the fridge open and grab the orange juice carton before shutting it and seeing Javier standing right next to me. I jump, the orange juice carton leaving my hand, and Javier leans down, catching it well before it hits the floor.

"Good reflexes, Batman," I say.

"I always preferred Superman," he tells me, and I smile as I take the orange juice back.

“Sera is sleeping,” I tell him.

“I know. It’s you I wanted to see,” he tells me, and I raise an eyebrow at him. I didn’t expect that.

“Why?” I ask as he steps closer, crowding me into the counter and forcing me to breathe in his forest scent, and I’m pretty sure it’s jasmine that I’m smelling on him as well.

“Did you get my gift I sent?” he asks.

“Yes, and thank you. Why did you send them?” I reply.

“They are a symbol of my respect for you and your caring nature of my sister,” he explains to me, those gray eyes watching me so damn closely.

“So you’ve decided to not be a dickhead to me anymore?” I ask.

“If you were in my shoes, would you have been nice to the person who has your sister as their slave?” he asks.

“No, but I didn’t choose for Sera to be what she is. I hate that word, and I never use it,” I tell him.

“You’re an odd demon,” he remarks. “I usually cannot stand your kind, but you are different, and I like it.”

“You could say that,” I reply with a chuckle. “Would you like some orange juice?”

“Sure,” he replies, smiling at me. It’s rather odd to see him smile if I’m being honest.

“Okay.”

“It’s gone from tense to awkward between us rather quickly,” he points out. I’m glad he said it and not me.

“Right? It’s not like we’ve had a one-night stand and never want to speak to each other again,” I mutter.

“Odd reference,” he replies, and I know my cheeks are a shade darker as I realise how that must have just sounded. I get two glasses out of the cupboard and place them on the counter before opening the orange juice carton and pouring the drinks.

“Do you always wear red silk pyjamas?” he asks, reaching out and smoothing his hand down my arm. My body shivers without me even meaning to, and I swear to god his touch, even through clothing, is soothing. Way too soothing. This is Javier, my best friend’s insanely hot brother and soon-to-be alpha of a giant wolf pack. I can’t enjoy his touch. I have enough possessive men around me that are too hot for their own good.

“No, but these are what the school left me. They even have the logo on them,” I explain to him.

“Have you not gone shopping yet for your own things?” he asks.

“Shopping would mean leaving this place, and that’s not something I’m allowed to do. I wouldn’t risk it anyway, not until after my parents’ trial,” I explain.

“Why are your parents on trial?” he asks. “Sera didn’t tell me about that.”

“For abandoning the cause and murdering five high demons by taking their souls or something. Only I don’t think they did the second one,” I explain to him. “I just don’t know anything until I get to speak to my parents. I’m counting the days, to be honest.”

“When is the trial?” he asks.

“In a month and a half, that is if they don’t move it again,” I explain to him. “Anyway, I don’t really want to talk about it.” I walk over and sit down on the sofa, crossing my legs as I sip my orange juice. Javier walks over and sits next to me, and both of us just quietly exist for a moment.

“Tell me something about you,” he suggests.

“How about we play a game and make it fun? Twenty questions? I will answer one and you can answer the next,” I offer.

“I like the idea. I’m going first,” Javier says, and I nod in agreement. “What do you want for your future?”

“That’s a big question,” I mutter, but I know the answer right away. “I want to go back to the church with my parents and have a normal life as they wanted me to.”

“I hope you get what you want,” he tells me, and I think he really means that.

“I may want it, but I’m starting to realise what I want might not ever be possible,” I say and clear my throat. “My question is: what is it like growing up in a wolf pack?”

“Erm, it isn’t a bad place to grow up. The pack is one giant family, but once my mother figured out she couldn’t have any more children...I became the only heir, and everything became about training me to be the alpha. Nothing else was important to my parents, and Sera was my only real escape from pack life, my bit of normal,” he explains to me. He doesn’t give me a chance to reply before he is asking his question. “What is your favourite colour?”

“Green. Not a forest green but more like pale green,” I tell him. “What about you?”

“White. I like how pure and simple it is. There is nothing white can mix with other colours and become like it, which I always struggled with. I can’t be like everyone else even if I tried. The colour white can hide in plain sight, and there is nothing expected of the colour,” he says.

“You’ve really thought about that one,” I say.

“Once or twice,” he smirks. “What is your favourite thing to do?”

“Every Sunday, my parents would give me leftover change, and I would go to an arcade down the street. My favourite thing was to play the arcade games and forget the world around me for a little bit,” I answer him. “You?”

“It sounds silly,” he mutters, “but we have tall trees around the village our pack is in, and since I was a kid, I’ve loved to climb them and jump from one to another. It’s how I climb the cliffs here so easily and sneak in.”

“You’re a regular Tarzan,” I say with a smile. “Maybe you can show me how to climb one day? I’m really bad at it.”

“Where do you think I got the idea to jump off the trees I was climbing from?” he asks, and I laugh. “*Tarzan* was my favourite movie.”

“I preferred *Pinocchio*,” I admit, and he leans closer, tapping my nose once. “You best not tell me any lies then,” I chuckle and blush at the same time. “Do you have a girlfriend?” I ask. I don’t know why I ask it, but I really want to know.

“No. Alphas do not date until they find their mate, and then they mate for life,” he tells me. “What about you?”

“I had trouble making friends at my old school, let alone boyfriends. I actually never kissed anyone until I came here and someone kissed me without warning,” I mutter. “I slapped him for it, but he doesn’t know that it was my first kiss.”

“You should kiss a few frogs before finding someone special,” he tells me.

“You watch too many Disney films, Javier,” I warn him.

“How did you know?” he asks with a cheeky grin, and I can’t help but laugh as his hand comes and rests on my shoulder. I freeze as his warm touch is soothing, and I look toward him, meeting his gray eyes with my own. “A first kiss should be treasured, especially with someone as beautiful as you, Lexi.”

“Have you kissed anyone, Jav?” I ask him.

“Yes. I’m not allowed to date, but that doesn’t mean—”

“I get it,” I interrupt with a chuckle, and I stand up, moving his hand off my shoulder. “Right, I need to go to bed. I will see you around, yeah?”

“Yeah, Lex,” he says, putting the glass down next to mine on the coffee table. I stay still as he walks right up to me until our chests are just touching with every breath we take. His hand gently cups my cheek, his thumb pressing across my bottom lip ever so softly for a second. I’m leaning up, my eyes slowly closing just as I hear a door being pulled open. We jump back from each other as we turn to see Amethyst coming out of the bedroom, and she sits down, silently judging me as she looks between Javier and me.

“See you around, Lex,” Javier says before heading to the gap in the glass we hide with the curtains and a flat, thin piece of wood.

“Wolves are dangerous to get into bed with. Especially for demons, Lexi,” she warns me, sounding far more knowing than a cat should be. Maybe she has been listening to people’s conversations around here or something.

“How would you even know that, Amethyst?” I enquire.

“I hear things. Now back to the important things, did you find the catnip?” she asks, and I shake my head at her with a chuckle, my eyes drifting back to the broken window as I hear a long howl in the distance.

Why do I feel disappointed that I didn’t get a kiss with Javier? I walk into the bedroom, closing the laptop and switching the lights off before getting into my bed. I gasp as something burns my chest, and I lift my necklace up, seeing the red orb glowing brighter than usual. I take the necklace off and shove it onto the bedside unit before rolling over and closing my eyes, feeling really odd as I drift off to sleep.

## CHAPTER 22

DARK IS THE SEA THAT NEVER ENDS



My eyes open of their own accord as my legs move off the bed, and I start to really freak out as my feet touch the cold hardwood floor. I soon realise that I can't control my body, and everything is fuzzy as my body walks out of the room, pushing the door open with my arms. Sickness feels like it is rising in my throat, but nothing actually happens as I carry on walking. I can feel the cold floor under my feet, I can feel the tears fluttering down my cheeks, but I can't make myself stop. What the fuck is going on?

*Let me out. I will save us and destroy our enemies.* The woman's voice I've not heard in ages fills my mind, but I can't reply to her. I can't let her help me. I try to scream, to make any noise, but nothing comes out. I can't do anything to control my body right now, and I don't know why. I suddenly come to a stop in the corridor, and my body turns around to face the front door. I'm powerless as I walk to the door and leave my apartment, even though I really don't want to be leaving at all. I pray someone sees me, that someone is going to come and save me. My body swiftly moves down the silent corridor, my bare feet doing little to make any noise despite how much I'd love for them to make a noise right now. I don't know what is going on as I push another door open at the side of the room, leading to a place I've never been.

Outside on the cliffside of the academy. Cold, salty air blows against me, causing my silk pyjamas to stick to my body. A sense of dread blurs my thoughts as my body walks toward the cliff, and I struggle so hard to stop it. I pray to all the gods I can think of to stop myself walking off that cliff.

Fear makes me feel like my heart is going to stop beating as the sharp rocks cut into my feet as I get closer to the edge.

*I'm going to die.*

I can only shout no in my head, fear blinding me as I walk straight off the cliff, my body crashing at full speed down the cliff, air whistling past my ears and blocking out the sound of the waves. The world seems to slow down as I open my eyes, seeing the sharp and deadly rocks below just come into my view. My body suddenly comes back into my control, and I scream, wrapping myself into a ball as I try to embrace the fact I'm going to die. I'm seventeen, and I'm going to die before I ever got a chance to really live.

"Alexandria!" I hear someone shout, and I brace myself for the cold water just as something slams into me, wrapping me in their warm embrace. I recognise the black wings right in front of me, and the strong arms holding me close to them. *Morgan*. I wrap my arms around Morgan's shoulders as he flies us up the cliff, saltwater smacking against us as hard as the cold wind. Morgan flies us past the door I came out of and lands on a balcony about four floors up, and I collapse to the floor, sucking in a deep breath. His hands sharply cup my cheeks, his eyes looking stormier than the sea I nearly died in.

"Why the fuck would you do that to yourself? Why?" he demands, shouting at me in such anger that I'm almost scared of him. *Almost*.

"I didn't. I swear it wasn't my choice, but I don't know how to explain it. I just couldn't stop my body walking off the cliff," I try to tell him without my voice cracking from the fear. My whole body is shaking as we just stare at each other; both of us not willing to break eye contact.

It's the first time I've really seen Morgan. The real, vulnerable Morgan underneath the hard exterior he always puts up. I'm not sure why I'm seeing him, though.

"You were hexed. Fuck," he mutters, still holding my cheeks to the point I start to wonder why he is so angry. "Did you see who hexed you?"

"I thought you wanted me dead, Mr. Morganach, so why would you care?" I ask, humour making me less utterly terrified. I think I know the answer anyway.

"By my hand, not a fucking cliff. The sea doesn't get to take your life, Lexi. No one does, but me," he demands.

"I'm not sure if that was romantic or scary," I mutter.

"Scary," he deadpans.

“Sure,” I grin, and he shakes his head at me as I stand up. He wraps his hands onto the bannister, holding on so tightly his knuckles go white. I look around the balcony, seeing a little table with two chairs on the one side and two green plants by my feet. The door to the inside is open, and I walk through it, seeing a large apartment room. There is a four-poster bed on the one side; it has four swirling black edges and silky black sheets. Brown, rusted leather sofas surround a glass coffee table with a television on the wall in front of them. The kitchen is pretty much a replica of the one I have, and other than some personal bits and bobs lying around, there isn’t much in here. It smells like Morgan though, that sandalwood scent I now only can associate with him.

“Who would try to kill you? Do you know?” he asks.

“I don’t,” I reply, wrapping my arms around myself.

“We are going to your room. For a hex to be successful on a demon, there must be an item of power near the demon when they sleep,” he explains to me. “Maybe a voodoo doll.”

“So you need to see my bed?” I ask with a small smile.

“How can you be making jokes minutes after nearly dying,” he asks me with an annoyed groan. “Not forgetting the fact you haven’t said thank you to me yet.”

“Thank you,” I reply, wanting to change the subject altogether. It’s becoming a speciality of mine to change the subject at this rate. I just can’t take the idea of talking about what just happened and how goddamn scared I was of dying. I can’t die yet, not before I get my parents out of their trial. It makes me wonder if the person who did this to me has something to do with the trial.

“Forget it. Come on,” he says, nodding his head at the front door. I rush after him, and he holds the door open for me.

“Thank you,” I say, and he doesn’t reply to me, just keeps his eyes on mine for a brief second, his emotions so guarded I doubt even a mind reader could guess them.

“No wonder she isn’t interested in us, brother. She has a teacher’s attention instead,” Nikoli’s voice drifts to me, and I turn around to see him and Claus walking straight to us, both in their uniforms, but Nikoli is missing his hoodie because I stole it and haven’t given it back. He hasn’t asked for it yet, and he has seen me wearing it. Claus told me I could have his, but I like Nikoli’s better at the moment.



“It’s not like that,” Morgan says, sounding like that could be the worst thing in the world. Glad to know how he feels then, even if it damn well hurts.

“Morgan saved my life. I was hexed, at least that’s what we think. I walked off the cliff, and Morgan grabbed me before I hit the sea,” I tell them, and their expressions change almost instantly. Claus is pulling me to his chest in the next second, wrapping his arms around me while Nikoli starts shouting. Claus whispers words of comfort, though I’m so in shock that I’m not feeling how I should right now. I’m shocked and fucking scared.

“Who the fuck would be stupid enough to try and kill her?” Nikoli demands.

“There has to be an item or something close to where she slept. Hexing a demon isn’t easy, and I believe voodoo has a play in this. I’ve seen higher up demons and teachers use both voodoo and hexes to take complete control of a demon body,” Morgan tensely replies. “There are only a few students with higher demon blood who are capable of doing this. I doubt a teacher would bother; it would be easier to kill her in another way.”

“Let’s go,” Nikoli grumbles, spinning around and storming down the corridor, Morgan following close behind him. Claus keeps his arm wrapped around me as we follow them, his warm breath blowing against my neck as he looks at me.

“Are you okay?” he gently asks. “I mean, fuck, how can you be?”

“Once the shock wears off, I will answer that,” I honestly reply.

“I will wait until it does then,” he tells me as we get to the lift and wait in silence. The lift comes up, and the doors open. We all get inside, and Morgan presses the button for my floor.

“Three demons and an angel in a lift. Sounds like the start of a bad porno,” Claus mutters, and my lips twitch in the tense space.

“This is not a time for jokes, Claus,” Morgan snaps.

“Sure thing, Mr. Morganach,” Claus replies, though he still sounds like he is taking the piss. The lift thankfully doesn’t take long, and the doors open. Morgan and Nikoli are off in moments, and I rush to keep up with them as they walk into my apartment. They head straight for my bedroom, which is empty, and there is no sign of Amethyst anywhere. Morgan lifts my mattress and leans it against the wall as Nikoli reaches down and picks

up a doll. A very small, woven doll that is the image of me. And I've seen it before.

"Lexi, is everything okay?" Sera's scared voice speaks behind me, and I turn, nodding once at her in her green pyjamas and messy bed hair. Sera somehow makes me feel safer just to see her, but I don't want her involved in this right now. She will only panic.

"You should go back to bed. I will tell you everything tomorrow," I explain to her. "It really isn't that bad." I'm a terrible liar, and she knows it.

"Are you sure?" she asks, looking around at the three guys in my room. She must think I'm collecting them and storing them in my bedroom.

"Positive," I reply, and she nods once more before walking off.

"Could your wolf let someone in here to leave this?" Morgan asks.

"Sera would never betray me," I firmly tell them all. "And I've seen the doll before. Letitia Lale made it."

"The fucking cow," Nikoli growls. "I'm going to kill her." I try to catch his arm as he passes me, but I just miss. Morgan is swift to walk out with him, and I sigh, looking at Claus.

"I want to stop them, and another part of me doesn't want to. She tried to kill me," I whisper to him. My words feel all sorts of wrong and too long for this room in the middle of the night.

"Then don't stop them, darling," Claus smoothly suggests, letting go of me and walking across my room to pick my mattress up and put it back on my bed. I bite my lip as I worry more and more about how wrong this all feels.

"What would that make me though?" I ask, and before he can stop me, I turn around and run out of my room.

"You don't even know which way they have gone!" he shouts as he follows after me.

"Knowing Morgan and Nikoli like I do, they will kill her the same way she tried to kill me," I shout back to him as I find the room I walked through earlier. I slam through the doors and get outside, feeling the freezing cold, wet salty air slam into my lungs as I see Mr. Morganach holding a screaming Letitia above the sea. Nikoli stands at the edge of the cliff, looking like the very storm itself with his dark emotions I swear I can almost feel. I run to him, and he looks down at me with some surprise.

"Morgan! Don't do this for me. Please!" I shout at him. He simply shakes his head at me and moves his gaze to Nikoli.

“Begging doesn’t suit you, Alexandria,” Nikoli tells me, reaching out and grabbing my arm. “For every action, there is always an opposite and equal reaction,” he quotes Isaac Newton like that makes everything make sense. “Let’s see if she survives what she made you do.”

“No!” I say as he goes to lift his other hand, and I grab it to stop him signalling Morgan. “We might be demons, but it doesn’t mean we have to be evil. This feels wrong. Doesn’t it feel that way to you?”

“Oh, Alexandria,” he pulls his arm out of my grip and cups my cheek for a brief second. “No, it doesn’t feel wrong to me. It feels like revenge.” He lets go of my cheek and signals Morgan. Everything slows down as I twist around, hearing my heart pounding hard in my ears to see Letitia falling down through the air, her body rapidly spinning as she falls, her long blonde hair hiding her face, and her red pyjamas standing out in the dark night. It’s beautifully tragic. It’s beautifully wrong. Her body soon disappears under the water, and I push Nikoli’s arm away as tears fall down my cheeks.

“It had to be done, Lexi. Don’t you see that?” Claus shouts at me as I walk away from him toward the door. I need to be away from them all. “She would have never stopped until you were dead.”

“It still doesn’t mean it was right to murder her!” I shout at him, and he seems shocked at my outburst as I walk away into the building, wishing I could put every part of tonight behind me.

*DA has never seemed so dark as it does this night.*

## CHAPTER 23

### A KISS TO STOP EVERYTHING



“Are you ready?” Morgan asks, and I nod once at him, bracing myself to move. I watch closely as he lets the orb go, and it floats off, rapidly disappearing around the bookcases. I close my eyes and run, knowing I trust my instinct to find the orb for me. I run faster around the corner of a bookcase and swiftly turn to the left, avoiding Mr. Morganach, who always catches me in this point, in the same place. I’ve done this so many times the last three weeks that I know where he is going to be, I sense his movements like my own.

*Left.*

I sharply jump to the right into the passageway, opening my eyes and grinning when I see the prize inches away from me now. I trust my demon, the little words she sends to me to guide me how she wishes. I know I will pay the price when she eventually becomes stronger, but I feel like we are on the same path. I look back to see Mr. Morganach running at me, using his wings to propel himself fast, but I reach out and grab the orb, hardly believing I just did that. The orb is much colder than I suspected it would be, and it is about the weight of an orange.

“Holy fuck, I won!” I shout, jumping on the spot and holding the orb in the air.

“Congratulations. Your demon powers have excelled to such a point you are moving three times the speed you were when we started, and you are trusting your demon to guide you. Is she speaking to you?” he asks, holding a hand out for the orb for me to give back. A little part of me doesn’t want to give it back because I finally have it. I sigh and drop it in his open hand, knowing it’s not the orb I wanted. It was simply winning.

“Sometimes. When I need her,” I explain to him.

“She will try to take over soon. You’re eighteen soon, right?” he asks me.

“Two months away. It’s my birthday three days before the trial for my parents actually,” I say, sucking in a breath as I remember how much shit my parents are in, and I really have no idea how I can help them.

“Shitty birthday present,” he states.

“Not if they are freed,” I remark, raising an eyebrow.

“Right.” He smiles, but I can tell he doesn’t mean it. “If it doesn’t all work out, I will be here for you.”

“You can’t promise that, Mr. Morganach,” I remind him.

“I’ve told you to call me Morgan. I mean it,” he firmly tells me. Here is this thing again...something that I can’t quite decide what it is. I think it’s just over protectiveness because of the angel blessing I have and how frustrated he is that he hasn’t heard back from his professor with answers. Apparently, his professor could hardly believe it and wouldn’t if anyone but Morgan had told him it.

“Morgan,” I mutter.

“I feel like you’re mine, so yes, I mean it when I say I will be here for you.” He shocks me into utter silence as I meet his green eyes. Even in the dim library, they are like a light in the dark that I want to chase.

“As my teacher?” I ask. “Or as someone you need to protect because of what you saw on my thigh?”

“I’m not a good teacher, Miss Cameron,” he reminds me, and I chuckle. “And it’s not just about that. I feel like I must be here for you and protect you.”

“As a friend, yes?” I ask, and my heart pounds as he doesn’t reply, his jaw tight and his eyes burning much brighter than before.

“Well, well. What do we have here? More teacher-student moments I want to interrupt?” Nick drawls, and I turn to see him at the start of the corridor, though he is watching Morgan and doesn’t look at me. Nick’s white shirt is undone by a few buttons, showing off nothing but golden skin underneath, and his sleeves are rolled up to his elbows, giving him a more casual look than I am used to. It’s ridiculously sexy as he leans against the bookshelf. Every librarian’s dream guy right there.

He just needs glasses. Sexy glasses.

“I won the prize. Isn’t that great?” I ask, picking up how pissed off Nick is as his eyes flicker to me for a second before back to Morgan. I’ve been ignoring him and Claus since what happened with Letitia, even more after her body was found a few days later and I had to explain everything to Mr. Bisgaard. I ignored Morgan for a little bit, but he has a way of getting under my skin and not making it easy. Claus and Nikoli made it more than easy to have time away from them. I told Sera everything, and Sera no doubt told Javier a lot as he keeps sending me homemade food.

Not that I mind the sympathy cookies.

“She is not yours.” The words so carelessly escape Nick’s mouth as Mr. Morganach moves to stand in front of me.

“Say it again, you little prick. I dare you,” Mr. Morganach growls, and with how much he loves a fight, this cannot end well. I doubt I’m anything but an excuse for these two to compare their demon and angel dick sizes. Nick walks right up to Morgan, and they both stare each other down as I slip past them both and start walking backward to escape this. They aren’t going to listen to me.

“She. Is. Not. Fucking. Yours.”

He said it.

Mr. Morganach laughs, a pretty sexy and equally scary laugh before slamming his fist into Nick’s face. Nikoli hits straight back, not missing a second and clocks Mr. Morganach in the jaw, and the sound of it cracking makes me cringe. The ground starts to shake as Nikoli and Mr. Morganach fight, hitting each other time and time again, knowing their healing is going to fix it anyway. Neither one of them is stupid enough to fight with holy fire. I know it’s a power that angels can use to kill demons and take their souls, but because Nikoli and Claus are both half angel, they both can use holy fire. So can their father, and it’s said he used it to open the doors of hell. I watched a lesson in survival basics where Claus and Morgan made bows and arrows out of holy fire and shot targets. I also know some teachers have bracelets made in hell that allow them to use holy fire to travel around the academy.

As soon as I thought it, green holy fire shoots out of the ground around us, and they both grab a handful, shaping it into swords before swinging it at each other—fire in a library, great fucking idea. I back away because that stuff can actually kill me.

The lunatics.

“What a pair of tools. What the fuck are they arguing over?” Claus shouts behind me, and I turn back to him, running over to his side.

“Me,” I mutter with red cheeks.

“Then stop them before someone actually gets hurt,” Claus suggests. “Or before they burn all the books in here.”

“Why is that my job?” I ask.

“Nikoli is your fated mate, and we all know you and the teacher are getting dirty,” he carelessly remarks. “Jealousy is a nasty problem we need to erase.”

“We aren’t—” I get cut off as Claus grabs me by the waist and kisses me. The moment our lips touch, it feels like sparks light up my whole body, bursting to explode into a million pieces for Claus to pick up. He expertly controls my lips, so much so I don’t notice anything but Claus until he lets me go. I never wanted a kiss as much as I don’t want Claus to stop kissing me in this moment. I’m speechless and in shock, seeing Claus’s amused grin and something else shining in his eyes. “That’s how you stop them.” Claus walks away like that was nothing, leaving me panting with sore lips and an even more confused heart. I turn around to see Mr. Morganach is walking away; I can only see his wings, and Nick is gone altogether.

That’s how you stop a fight, I guess.

## CHAPTER 24

### HEXES AND SPELLS



“Good work, Miss Cameron. Your hexing skills are becoming a force to be reckoned with,” Miss Herman states as a woman I’ve just hexed walks around in circles like I asked her to. I hate this, doing this to someone, but I know it’s them or me in the end, and Miss Herman is too kill-happy to risk annoying with my morals. I look across to the other table where Maggie is sitting, her arms crossed as she stares down at her spellbook. I’ve wanted to say something to her...but what?

*Sorry your best friend was thrown into the sea because she tried to kill me.*

It’s not something I’m going to find a card for.

If I have any morals left at this point, this class is making it impossible to keep them.

“Go and walk yourself back into your cage and shut the door,” I tell the woman with gray hair and empty eyes. They all have empty eyes, and it helps me to think they aren’t people at all. I always pick this old lady, mainly because she looks so lost and she is the only one not crying in those cages. At least I know they did something so bad that their government decided to give them over to us to be used like this.

Only it doesn’t make me feel all that better. I know the guys Nick and Claus use to hex can’t have all done something wrong.

“Have you heard about the ball?” Lela asks me as I sit back down in my seat and start writing the final symbol of the hex that worked today. My spellbook has four complete pages of hexes, ones that can do anything from making someone spin around or make someone make you a cup of tea. I’m just happy I’ve gotten better at this and everything else, it seems.



“What ball?” I ask her.

“The ball in a couple of weeks. Have you not heard or seen the posters on the walls?” she asks me.

“Oh, the snowflake one? I didn’t bother to read it,” I explain.

“Yes. It’s a winter ball. Ask Sera to get a dress made for you; you will need one, and everyone has to attend it,” she tells me. “It will be fun.”

“Sounds fun,” I say as we come to the end of the lesson. I don’t mind dancing and music, not sure about balls as I’ve never been to one. Time to try something new, I guess. “See you later, Lela.”

“Later,” she says as I walk out, holding my spellbook tightly. I walk out of class and bump straight into someone, feeling hands grab my waist to hold me up. I look up and lock eyes with burning green ones, a swirling green fire that is destroying my heart. It damn well beats so hard it could stop when I’m around him now.

“Hey, you cancelled class this morning again. Can we talk?” I ask. I haven’t seen him since the library last week and everything that happened there. He hasn’t been attending survival basics either. It’s like he has given up on me.

“No,” a simple answer, but it is anything but simple.

“Morgan—”

“Mr. Morganach is my name, and don’t you have somewhere to be? I sure fucking do,” he snaps at me before walking away and getting lost in the crowd of students that are coming out of their classes. I gulp down the embarrassment of that moment and head back to my room. I walk in and put my spellbook on the side.

“Good afternoon, want a drink?” Sera asks.

“Sure, thanks. Hey, do you know about some ball?” I ask her.

“Yes, and I ordered you a dress for it too. Is that okay?” she asks.

“Perfect actually,” I reply, and she smiles at me as I go and sit down on the sofa, resting my head back as I hear the familiar sound of the wooden panel by the window being moved. I look back to see Javier change back from his wolf to his very naked self and smirk at me. I briefly wonder how he manages to have perfectly tanned golden skin on all of his body. Not one pale bit at all.

“I’m really sorry, I have to go to a meeting tonight,” Sera explains to us after Javier finishes pulling on his gray shirt. I swear he could get dressed in one of the rooms—not in front of me—but that doesn’t happen much.

“Show’s over. I’m going to nap,” Amethyst says, purring as she walks off into my bedroom. It really was a show with all the muscles, tattoos, and goddamn sexy body Javier has.

And he knows it.

“Another one?” I ask, leaning forward on my seat as Javier crosses his arms, leaning against the wall by the window panel he just snuck in through.

“Something big is happening soon, I think. The heads of the management for wolf slaves are giving us all extra jobs, everything in the academy needs to be cleaned, and they are even making us repaint most of the rooms. I don’t know why though,” she explains to us.

“Maybe they just wanted an update,” I suggest.

“Maybe,” she says, shrugging her shoulders. “I have to go; I will be back later, brother.”

“I will stay and wait,” he replies, and she waves at us before opening the door and leaving.

“What movie did you pick this time then?” I ask as Javier walks over to me, and instead of answering, he hands me the DVD.

*Tarzan.*

“You want to watch a movie about yourself? How very vain of you,” I remark with a grin.

“You’re not funny, you know,” he tells me, but he is grinning.

“I am, and you know it. That’s why you are smiling,” I point out with a slight chuckle.

“You make me smile even when it’s been a shit day, but you still aren’t funny,” he tells me, and I shake my head at him.

“Go and get drinks, *Tarzan*. I’m going to put the DVD on,” I tell him, hearing his mutter about a demon bossing an alpha wolf around as he walks off to get some drinks that Sera had already left out for us. I sit on the sofa, and Javier moves to sit at my side, offering me Diet Coke in a glass, which he knows is my favourite thanks to all the movie nights we have with Sera. He always has Fanta. It’s becoming scary how damn well I know Javier now. He feels like a regular part of my life. We sit comfortably watching the movie for a little before my eyes drift to Javier, liking how he laughs. The sound is comforting and sexy all at the same time. Even though he is smiling and laughing, I think something is wrong because he is so much tenser than he usually is.

“What made your day so shit then?” I ask.

“You really want to know?” he replies.

“We are friends, so sure,” I point out.

“Friends with a demon,” he chuckles to himself. “My parents would be horrified.”

“Well, they aren’t here, and they don’t know me. I’m pretty sure my parents wouldn’t approve of my friendship with an alpha’s son, but I don’t care. I think you are pretty awesome...sometimes,” I explain to him. He runs a hand through his silky black hair, pushing it back, and my fingers itch to touch it.

“Only sometimes? I need to work on my friendship skills then,” he states.

“Stop changing the subject, what happened today?” I ask, and he stretches his arm across the back of the sofa and sighs before meeting my eyes. I like how he always has to look you in the eyes as he talks to you.

“My father has called all female wolves of good breeding to a ceremony. It’s an old wolf thing, a way of finding your soul mate,” he explains to me. “I have to meet each of them, and it will take weeks.”

“Why are you mad about that? Sounds like speed dating, but you actually find the right person for you in the end,” I say, ignoring how a small part of me doesn’t like it.

“I don’t want to date anyone, let alone find my soul mate yet. It feels wrong, and my wolf is not impressed,” he explains to me.

“What does your wolf want?” I probe.

“Maybe one day I will tell you that, but not right now,” he says.

“Why?” I ask.

“It’s complicated, Lex,” he tells me, and I nod in understanding, knowing when to leave a subject and when not to.

“Does your wolf talk to you like my demon sometimes does?” I ask, curious about how everything works.

“Yes and no. I don’t speak to my wolf as much as feel what he wants and needs. It’s hard to explain,” he replies to me.

“I bet,” I remark.

“Do you ever want to run away from everything?” he suddenly asks.

“Every single damn day,” I answer honestly. I rest my head back, feeling the tips of his fingers skim across the back of my neck, leaving me

shivering and wanting to sink my head closer to him. I don't move though. He is my friend, and friends don't do stuff like that.

"Should we run away together? Leave the world behind, Lexi?" he chuckles.

"You're awfully tempting, Tarzan," I say, seeing his gray eyes flash for just a second, like lightning in a dark storm cloud.

"It's not me that is tempting, Lexi," he darkly warns.

"Are you saying I am?" I joke, but something about his eyes make me think this is more serious than I thought.

"Very," he remarks, leaning closer. "Demons like you make it easy for me to understand why an angel fell to hell for the love of a demon."

"You know your history," I point out.

"Lexi—" he is cut off as the door opens, and I jump away from him as Sera walks in, quickly shutting the door.

"Javier, you need to get moving. They are talking about adding extra security to the academy for whatever is happening. I don't think it will be safe for you to come back," she explains.

"I'm not leaving you alone here, Sera," he protests.

"She isn't alone, Javier. I will protect her with my life, I promise. Is there a way to connect to you through social media or something?" I suggest.

"The pack has no signal, but I can sneak out to a local town and use a computer there. Sera, you can email me on Lexi's laptop. Okay?" he says, walking to the kitchen and finding a notepad on the side with a pen. He jots down something before hugging Sera and walking right up to me. I'm surprised when he pulls me into a hug, holding me close to him, and I realise how nice it is to be hugged by him. God, I'm not stupid enough to not realise I'm falling for Sera's brother. Even though he will soon be mated and I won't see him again.

Even though he is impossible to have as mine.

My stupid heart doesn't care about that though.

"Keep yourself and Sera safe. If you need anything, I'm one email away. Even if it means running away, I'm here for you," he tells me.

"You need to go," I remind him.

"I know," he tells me, closing his eyes for a second and stepping back. Sera comes to my side as Javier shifts into his wolf, ripping his clothes to

pieces, and I lock eyes with the big gray wolf in front of me. I step forward, but Sera grabs my arm.

“Don’t,” she warns me, but I shake her off.

“It’s just Javier,” I tell her as I walk up to the wolf and fall to my knees, so our eyes are at the same level. The wolf surprises me by bowing his head down, and I gently place my hand on his head, running my fingers through the thick, silky-soft brown hair. In seconds, Javier’s wolf hits my arm with his paw, cutting me as I jump back.

“Lexi!” Sera falls to my side as I watch Javier’s wolf run to the window and sneak out of the panel before disappearing into the cliffs.

“Why would he hurt me?” I ask as Sera pulls up my sleeve.

“You don’t understand,” Sera tells me, her voice serious and almost frightening, so unlike my friend. “His wolf just marked you as his. If anyone sees this, both you and Javier are dead.”

“What?” I splutter, moving my eyes to the three scratch marks on my wrist. What the fuck just happened?

## CHAPTER 25

### GIFTS OF AN UNUSUAL KIND



“You’re mad at me,” Claus suggests, his sexy voice makes me shiver like it always does. But I don’t want to speak to him right now. I just want to pretend he isn’t here.

“Duh,” I mutter at Claus, ignoring him as he stares at me. I carry on reading the book about Hellers and the millions of rules of their jobs that they have. Mr. Johan pretty much dropped the books on our tables before disappearing like all the rest of the teachers have this week. I don’t know what is going on, no one does, but all the teachers are spooked. Every room smells of fresh paint, polish, and there isn’t a dust bunny in sight.

“I did something for you,” he tells me. “It’s a gift.”

“Murder some kittens? Puppies?” I sarcastically suggest, and he narrows his eyes at me as I turn to face him. “I don’t want your kind of gifts, Claus. They are not nice.”

“This one is,” he tells me. “Don’t you want to know?”

“Nope,” I reply.

“Lexi,” he warns.

“Claus?” I reply.

“You are so stubborn. Please let me tell you,” he asks with a groan. Oh, I do like annoying him.

“Fine, what is it?” I ask, giving in.

“I made Nick release all of the hex guys we had. We won’t be doing any more ceremonies because we know you don’t like them,” he tells me, and I’m actually really shocked. A happy kind of shocked.

“You did that for me?” I ask.

“Despite everything...we want to be better for you. We were bought up with humans you know?” he remarks.

“Thank you,” I tell him, and I think I surprised him by reaching over and wrapping my arms around his neck, holding him close to me, and he flattens his hands on my waist, almost pulling me into his lap. “It really means a lot to me that you are trying to be better than everyone else in this academy.”

“You mean a lot to us, Lexi. To me,” he whispers to me, and I pull back, knowing my cheeks are blushing. I think that’s one of the nicest things anyone has ever said to me.

“What were your human foster parents like?” I ask him, leaning back in my seat.

“Don’t think I missed the change of subject, but I’m going to play,” he replies with a smirk. “Stephanie and Fernand were, without a single doubt, the kindest people I’ve ever known. They had good hearts, pure and simple, and they were good parents. The best really.”

“They sound very sweet. Where were you brought up?” I ask.

“Just outside Wales, in a small village. We never were good at making friends, but we had each other,” he explains to me.

“I think humans can sense we are forever. I never made friends either, and the first guy I went on a date with ran away crying,” I explain to him, and his lips twitch before he starts laughing.

“Don’t laugh, it’s mean,” I say, annoyance thick in my tone.

“It’s just hilarious. You really are amazing, Lexi,” he tells me, and I blush a little bit.

“When you said they were good parents, do you mean they are dead?” I gently ask after a little silence between us.

“Yes,” he says, looking away from me and to the desk where the book he was given is closed, and I doubt he has any intention of opening it.

“I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have asked,” I say.

“No, you can ask me anything,” he is quick to tell me, looking at me once more. “Our mother came to see us five years ago, even though she was banned from being near us until we turned seventeen. She got jealous and killed Stephanie and Fernand. We came home to see their dead bodies and our mother standing in their blood, pretending she didn’t do anything.”

“What happened next?” I ask, feeling horrified for him and Nick.

“Father said he cursed her and that we wouldn’t have to worry about seeing her again. We went back with him to hell for a bit and then lived here and there until coming to DA,” he explains.

“I’m so sorry your mother did that. It must be hard. Did you ever know her?” I ask.

“Father told us she never wanted us as babies, and he knew he couldn’t bring up children in hell, especially not with angel blood. We were getting sick, so on the advice of his guards, they suggested a human fostering. Turns out that is just what we needed to live and grow,” he explains to me.

“It’s almost like you lost two mothers and a father, only to meet a stranger,” I remark.

“He wasn’t a stranger to us. Dad always came to see us once a year in this old, burnt-out house. I don’t know why it had to be there, but we always saw him there,” he explains to me.

“So Lucifer can come to Earth? I thought—”

“Loopholes. Enough about my dad though, tell me something about your past,” he rapidly changes the subject. I did that earlier on him though, so I have to play.

“My old school uniform was orange,” I aimlessly say.

“Random, but I like it,” he chuckles.

“I once had a rabbit as a pet, that is until I forgot to lock the cage and she escaped into the garden. I found nothing but fluff the next day,” I divulge to him.

“No pets for you then,” he chuckles.

“Well, I have Amethyst,” I remind him.

“Why have I never seen your familiar?” he mutters.

“I know, right? It’s so odd that you keep missing her,” I say.

“Maybe if you invite me over for a sleepover, I would—” I put my one finger on his lips and shake my head before turning back to my textbook. “Is that a no?”

“Get some work done, Claus,” I mutter, hearing his sexy chuckle, feeling like it rolls over my skin, leaving goose bumps in its trail. Claus Lucifer is becoming an addictive part of my life, and I have the feeling he won’t be leaving any time soon. At the end of class, I gather my books and walk out with Claus, coming to a stop when I see Mr. Bisgaard outside my classroom. He waves a hand for me to follow, and I look toward Sera, who is walking over.



“Want me to come with you?” Claus questions me.

“No, I’m okay. See you later,” I tell him, resting my hand on his shoulder for a second as I pass. I follow Mr. Bisgaard to his office where Sera waits outside, and I go in. I sit in the seat as he closes the door and comes to sit down.

“Any news on my parents? Is something wrong?” I quickly ask, needing to know what is going on.

“As far as I’m aware, your parents are fine and the trial is set for two weeks’ time. I wanted to have a quick word with you about next week before everyone else hears,” he says, putting me at some ease.

“I’m confused,” I ponder.

“Next week, we have a special visitor who is coming to stay at the academy for at least a few weeks. He will be attending the court case with you, and it is important you behave as a respectable student of DA,” he tells me.

“What exactly do you want from me?” I ask, crossing my arms.

“Times are dangerous for your family, Miss Cameron. I am merely suggesting you do not do anything to put yourself in more danger,” he tells me, and it only makes me think of the wolf marking scratch on my arm that I don’t even understand, and the angel blessing on my thigh.

I’m a walking danger hazard at this point.

“Is that all?” I ask.

“There is one more thing. A letter from your uncle,” he tells me, pushing over a white envelope across the table. “Did your uncle send the necklace you wear?”

“Yes,” I reply, picking up the letter.

“How very expensive a gift it is. Do you understand what it is?” he enquires.

“Not exactly. I was told it would protect me, but then I was hexed—” I pause. “The necklace was glowing before I went to sleep. Maybe it knew?”

“Yes, it does. It senses danger, and it will glow. It is a powerful and rare gift. Do hold it close, Miss Cameron. I feel you need all the help you can get,” he tells me, and without saying goodbye, he bursts into green flames. I turn the envelope over and break the red wax seal before pulling out the letter.

*For my dearest niece,*

*I do hope The Demon Academy is looking after you well. We will meet very shortly at the trial, and I will be the one in the yellow cloak.*

*Your mum and dad send their love and deep regret they did not get to tell you about this world themselves. They hope you have adapted yourself to this world, and they are desperate to see you soon.*

*The second reason I write to you is to remind you of your father's last words to you in this pressing time.*

*We belong only to ourselves.*

*Your uncle,  
Harry Snowen*

I RUB the tears away from my eyes, wishing I could hear my parents say these words and that they weren't written by a stranger. Two weeks. That is all that is left between me and seeing my parents once more. How much could really go wrong in that time?

## CHAPTER 26

### THE DEVIL SPEAKS NO LIES



“Lexi...you look like a queen,” Sera states in utter shock as she steps back from me, finishing doing up the lace back of the dress.

“You chose the dress, so why are you surprised?” I ask her, watching as she rubs her arm with her other hand.

“I didn’t choose this dress, Lexi. I picked another one and never saw this one. It just turned up,” she explains to me.

“Maybe it went to the wrong room?” I suggest.

“I asked that, but everyone is certain this dress is yours,” she tells me. “I just don’t know who sent it and had it made.”

“Well, let’s not punch a gift horse in the mouth,” I say, and she chuckles at me as I look back in the full-length mirror. The dress is red...which every girl is wearing, and the guys have to wear white. The red dress has a deep v shape split down to my stomach, and it is so tight that I can wear it without a bra, and it looks amazing. The back is all lace, and thin straps of shiny red fabric rest on my upper arms down to my wrists. The rest of the fabric flows out into a princess shape dress that touches the floor. I’m keeping my flat black shoes on instead of the red heels that came with the dress, or I am going to be falling over. Sera has circled all my hair up into a bun with several braids at the sides, and she has placed tiny little diamond-looking slides into the front of the bun, which catch the light. My necklace from my uncle rests in the middle of my chest, the red glow from it matching the dress almost perfectly.

“Perfect,” Sera whispers, and I turn to her. I walk over and pull her to me, hugging her tightly.

“I wish you could come with me,” I tell her. I’d love to dance with Sera and chuckle.

“I know,” she tells me. “I love to dance as well.”

“Then I will dance for you,” I tell her as I pull back. “I want you to lock the door behind me and hide in here. I have a bad feeling about tonight, and I can’t quite place what it is.”

“I feel nervous too. My wolf is on edge, pushing against my mind even though it’s five days until the full moon,” she tells me.

“To make me feel better, grab a knife from the kitchen and keep it on you tonight as you hide,” I ask her to do.

“What about me? You care little for my existence,” Amethyst protests.

“Good idea. I will go and get one now,” Sera walks off, and I lean down, picking Amethyst up.

“Amethyst, I love you, you know that. I also know you are a very good escape artist, especially if anything goes wrong,” I tell her.

“Compliments do not work on me,” Amethyst grumbles, but she starts to purr as I scratch behind her ears and put her down on the bed. “Sera has catnip and fresh chicken for you. I asked her specifically.”

“Maybe you aren’t a betrayer after all,” she mutters.

“Maybe not,” I chuckle and leave her rolled up in a ball on my bed as I walk away.

“You look like someone I once knew,” I hear Amethyst say, sounding strange to my ears. I turn back to ask her who, but she has her eyes closed, her breathing heavy. I wonder who she used to know that wore red ball gowns? Maybe Amethyst is going crazy after all. I shake my head as I leave the room and come into the kitchen where Sera is waiting for me, a knife on the side next to her. The biggest one. My kinda girl.

“Good luck and have fun. It might be nothing—”

“Every teacher is acting weird and almost frightened this week. I don’t think this is just going to be a regular ball,” I remind her.

“Me neither, I just wanted to make you feel better,” she tells me.

“You’re my best friend, Sera. You know that?” I tell her as I walk to the door.

“You know you’re mine too,” she tells me, and I grin back at her, feeling more at home in this academy than I ever have done at this moment. This school gave me Sera, a chance to have her friendship, and I know it will last a long time between us.

“See you later,” I say as I open the door and walk out into the corridor. I keep my head high as I walk past the statue and around it to the double doors that have always been closed until this night. Sera told me the decorations in the ballroom were insanely beautiful, and I can’t actually wait to see this room. A few students in light-red dresses look at me, and I smile at them, but they don’t smile back.

“Enjoy the ball, Lexi,” I sharply turn to see Maggie at my side, appearing out of nowhere. She has a tight, floor-length red dress on with black vines wrapped around her arms and up to her neck. Her long hair is up in a high ponytail, curled to perfection, and her makeup makes her eyes seem darker and bigger somehow.

“Same to you,” I reply. I’m surprised she said anything to me at all.

“Letitia was my best friend, but I should have stopped her doing what she did. I didn’t, so it is as much my fault as it is yours that she is gone,” she tries to explain. It hurts that she knew she was going to try and kill me. At the end of the day, everything in this academy is trying to kill us, and as students, we should try to band together simply to survive.

“Her soul belongs to Lucifer now,” I say, but it doesn’t feel like me that said it at all. My demon echoes the words in my head, making it clear who pushed that thought out of my lips.

“As it should,” Maggie replies and nods her head at me before heading into the dark corridor behind the double doors. I keep my head high as I follow after her, walking down the silent corridor which has no lights. Two doors on the other side push open as I get close to them, revealing the ballroom, and the music blasts against my ears. An orchestra plays beautiful, soulful music on the one side of the ballroom, couples dance and spin around with each other in the middle, and the other side is a bar with small tables with red orbs floating in the middle of each table. I look back to the dancers, the way the women have long dresses that contrast with the men in white suits. The mix of red and white almost blur together like a beautiful painting, effortless and unique.

Unforgettable.

The ceiling has hundreds of red, white, and black orbs moving around in a circle shape, glowing brightly as they highlight the rest of the room. Tiny star-shaped red sparks of light fall from the ceiling, disappearing around the dancers, never quite touching them. Every part of the gold walled room is beautiful, and it doesn’t surprise me that they kept this room

locked up away from anyone. I glance down at the deep, dark wooden floors below me, seeing how polished they are.

“May I have this dance?” Morgan’s voice almost pulls me to him as I turn around, seeing his outstretched hand waiting for my answer. Morgan has a white suit on, which contrasts with his black wings right behind him. His black hair is styled to the left, pushed away from his forehead, and it makes him look less wild.

Not that anyone could tame Morgan. He is reckless and wild...and that’s one of the many things I actually like about him. His green eyes meet mine like we were drawn to each other across a crowded room and there really is no one else. His eyes make me never want to look away, not when I see what hides behind them. The emotions there. I don’t answer with words, not trusting myself to know how to speak or what to say, but I slide my hand into his. My hand is so small and soft compared to his rough, large hands, but he makes me feel safe in a way I didn’t know I needed. Morgan leads me to the dance floor, wrapping his arm around my waist and pulling me against his body. I place my free hand on his shoulder, never once breaking the eye contact between us.

“My professor wants to meet you. He has an idea about our secret,” Morgan whispers to me, never once breaking the dance we are doing, never once letting me have control as he moves me exactly how he wants. I try my best not to stand on his feet.

“I can’t leave here and neither can you, so how would that work?” I ask.

“A natural place, and I get one day off to go somewhere. We can work out a way for you to come with me,” he explains. He has it all thought out.

“You never did tell me why you are here in DA,” I enquire.

“You never needed to know,” he replies.

“And now?” I ask.

“Maybe one day, Miss Cameron,” he tells me.

“Always maybes with you, Mr. Morganach,” I mutter. “I am glad you are talking to me once again.”

“I realised something when I saw you today,” he explains.

“What was that?” I ask.

“That no matter how much I try to push you away, you will always be the only person I see in a crowded room,” he tells me, taking my breath away as the song stops. He steps back and nods his head to me before letting my hand go and walking away through the dancers. He can’t just say

that and walk away. I take one step to follow him when Claus and Nikoli step out of the dancers, blocking my view.

“Wow, you are stunning tonight, Lex,” Claus says, coming closer and resting his hand on my arm.

“The dress suits you,” Nick comments. It’s almost comical how the twins are so different in their compliments, but they mean exactly the same thing. It makes me smile.

“You two honestly don’t suit white. It gives the illusion you are innocent, and you are so not,” I remark, even though their tailored white suits do look extremely good on them, fitting them both to perfection.

“Come on, we want you to be at the front for this,” Claus says, taking my hand and pulling me through the crowd without telling me exactly what is going on. I look back to see Nick following closely until we get out of the crowd and face the stage where the orchestra was, but they have cleared out, and music from speakers plays softly in the background instead. Nick comes to my other side, his whole body extremely tense whereas Claus looks excited. What is going on?

“Welcome to the Unholy Winter Ball. We have someone very special to introduce you to, and he will be staying in our beloved Demon Academy for a while. We welcome our king, Lucifer,” Mr. Bisgaard says, and green fire burns across the floor. There are gasps and awes as a man in a red cloak walks up invisible steps, slowly appearing until he stands still in the middle of the green fire.

“Hello, Father,” Nick mutters under his breath, but I can’t take my eyes off Lucifer as he lowers his cloak hood, revealing silky white locks of hair falling over his forehead, his eyes are a perfect shade of green, and I remember him.

It’s Luc.

Fucking hell, Luc is short for Lucifer, and I met the King of Hell in a restaurant and didn’t even know it. Luc’s eyes are fixed on mine as he winks at me and claps his hands, the green fire disappearing.

“Join me, Alexandria,” Luc sweetly asks, holding out his hand, reminding me of Morgan holding his hand out earlier tonight. Only this time, I don’t want to take it.

“No,” I reply before I can think about it. His eyes flip in seconds, turning black as he jumps off the stage and walks right up to me, only Claus and Nick move in front of me to protect me.

“You know our mate, Father?” Claus asks.

“Your mate?” Luc asks, a long laugh escaping his lips, which is strangely seductive to hear. “She is not your mate. She is mine.”

“No—” Nick tries to say, but Luc cuts him off.

“Shut up, son, and get out of my way. I must speak to my mate,” he demands, and I pray to all gods that the twins don’t move, but they do. They don’t look at me as they walk away, and I can only watch them go, my heart hurting.

“I’m not your mate,” I protest, taking a few steps back.

“I’m not going to hurt you, but that is exactly what you are. It’s why I can walk on Earth because you have walked on Earth. Anywhere you go, I will follow,” he tells me. “You are my other half, my perfect mate.”

“I—” I try to speak, but I’m clueless on what to say.

“You are my mate, but I shall make allowances for you,” he decides, “rather than dragging you to hell with me until you learn to love me as you shall.”

“Like what?” I gulp.

“Time,” he says simply as my hands shake in fear. True, blinding fear.

“Time?” I echo.

“Time for us to truly get to know each other. I am staying here at DA, and you will be at my side every day,” he tells me. He has it planned that I want to be here or something.

“I am not your mate. You have it wrong,” I point out.

“Mr. Bisgaard, get me the choosing stone. Miss Alexandria Cameron needs to see who she is,” Luc demands. I’ve never seen Mr. Bisgaard disappear in flames so quickly. I pull my gaze to the twins by the door, Morgan next to them, and the casual way Nick is pushing Morgan away. I shake my head at him, just softly enough to let him know not to get involved. The choosing stone will say Luc is wrong, and then we can all go back to normal. Mr. Bisgaard appears in flames next to us this time, holding a red glowing stone out in his hand.

“Your highness,” Mr. Bisgaard bows his head, offering it.

“Take it, Alexandria. It will show you who you are meant to be,” Luc demands. Just to prove him wrong, I pick up the glowing stone and hear dozens of gasps around me from the other students left in the room.

“Nothing has happened,” I say to myself, but Luc hears it.



“Look at your reflection, Alexandria,” Luc suggests. I gaze down at the stone’s shiny surface and freeze, seeing a crown of flames hovering above my head. “You are my queen, and you shall rule at my side, Alexandria Cameron.”

## CHAPTER 27

### LOVE IS A SWEET BETRAYAL



“Time to celebrate, don’t you think?” he asks, and I glower at him. I don’t think so, no.

“What is your suggestion, your highness?” Mr. Bisgaard asks in excitement. And to think, I liked the headmaster until this point. Everyone is a slave to this fallen angel who claims he is my mate, why should I have expected anything else?

“Bring me all the wolf slaves. A mass murder is a brilliant way to party,” he suggests, and horror fills every part of my soul, of my mind, at the thought of anyone touching Sera. I can’t let the devil kill her. No fucking way.

“No!” I shout at him, dropping the stone and snapping out of my shock. Luc moves in front of me in the blink of an eye, grabbing my throat hard enough I can’t breathe. I gasp and fight his grip before he suddenly lets me go. I drop to my knees, coughing and gasping for air.

“Do not intervene with my ways. I am king, and as much as I need you, my queen, I will not be tested,” he demands, and I can only try to breathe. Thick tears fall down my cheeks, and he seems to smile as he sees he has scared me.

“Am I excused?” I bite out, hating him so much already. He is not my mate...I don’t care what he says and what the stone shows me to be. I don’t want to be his queen; I don’t want to be his anything for that matter.

“Of course. I’m sure you wish to rest. I will find you tomorrow,” he tells me, and for the first time since he arrived, I feel a little bit of hope. I can get Sera out of here, and if she lives a long-ass perfect life, then the world isn’t all shit after all. I pick myself up off my knees and rush to the door, finding

Claus and Nikoli still waiting for me. I can barely look at them, knowing they just left me there with their monster of a father. Maybe they knew all along; maybe they were playing games with me and my heart.

They are the sons of Lucifer after all.

“I’m sorry—” Claus tries to tell me, but I cut him off. I can’t hear it right now.

“Get as many wolves out of here as you can,” I demand, avoiding looking at the three wolves being dragged into the ballroom behind me.

“We can’t—” Claus starts to say.

“If you ever cared for me, even a small amount, you will get them out. I need you to,” I demand, and to my surprise, they both nod in agreement.

“We will help you, and then we need to talk,” Nick states and runs off down the corridor as I head off to my room. The door is locked when I get to it, and I bang it a few times.

“Sera, it’s me. Let me in, quickly,” I demand, hearing screams in the distance, and fear fills my body. I can’t let Sera die. I sigh in relief as she opens the door, and I shut it behind us, locking it once more.

“You need to get out of here. Now,” I desperately tell her, and that’s when I see Javier holding a towel around his waist.

“I’m here to take her,” Javier explains, walking up to me. “Go and stand by the door, Sera. I need to speak to Lexi for a moment.”

“Okay,” Sera says, but she hugs me tightly first. “I love you, Lexi. Don’t get hurt. Please, and thank you for everything.”

“Thank you, Sera. I love you too,” I tell her, letting her go and wiping my eyes as she walks away. I turn back and put my hand on the door, only to stop.

“No, you can’t go down there!” Javier says, gripping my arm tightly.

“Come with me. The wolves need help escaping him!” I demand. “Sera can get out herself and meet you with other wolves.”

“They are lost, Lexi,” he says, pulling me to him, his voice growing quieter and softer. “Come with me; I can protect you in my pack and make sure no one will ever touch you. Lucifer is on Earth, and if he is going to declare war, he will be putting a large target on your head. On every demon’s head.”

“If you feel anything for me at all, then you will follow me down there to save the other wolves,” I protest, hearing more screams. More cries for help. Sensing so much pain, it makes me feel sick. “They are your people!”

“I-I can’t do that,” he says, his eyes flickering to Sera by the window.

“Then let me go and get out of my way. Claus and Nikoli are getting your wolves out, and I won’t leave them on their own to do it,” I say, pulling my arm away and holding back my tears as I run to the door.

“Because they are your mates, right?” he angrily asks me, making me pause in the doorway. I look back, knowing I shouldn’t say anything, but I can’t help it. It’s not them as my mates he should be worried about.

“No, because I care about them. The wolves you are abandoning. If it was you down there, I’d fight for you too,” I tell him.

“I’d never put you at risk,” he demands, letting my arm go.

“But you are leaving me now. We both know who cares more in this,” I protest.

“In what? It was just a friendship I made with you to keep my sister safe, Lexi,” he says, and I humourlessly chuckle to hide the pain in my throat. I never thought I could be disappointed in Javier until right now. I never thought I’d see him as weak. I look over at Sera by the window as tears stream down her cheeks and mentally keep their images in my mind. I know I’m not seeing either of them again.

“Goodbye. I-I enjoyed knowing you both,” I say, though my voice cracks as I pull my hand away. I unlock the door and leave, running down the corridor.

I’ve just decided to stay in school with the devil.

God help me.

## EPILOGUE



LUCIFER (KING OF HELL)

“When are you going to tell her the truth about who she is? About why you really want her?” she enquires, as I lie down in the pool of wolf blood all around me. The bodies are piled in every corner as they burn, making a dreadful smell. I have never liked the smell of burning hair; it really is some fucked-up smelling shit.

And hell, wolves have a lot of hair.

“When we are mated, of course,” I reply, a coarse laugh escaping my lips. “What about you? Still pretending to be a simple talking cat instead of the exiled woman you really are?”

“I’m protecting her, just like I promised her parents I would do,” Lilith states, standing over me in all her naked glory. She is the perfection of the mortal body, or demon, in her case. Smooth golden skin, long silky black hair, wide hips, and perky breasts.

Perfection.

She is the reason I fell into hell all those years ago after all. I even gave her children, but I suspect she still hates me for stealing them away from her and giving them to human parents.

Our children are going to be a problem if they get in my way with Alexandria.

“Alexandria will be my queen, walk in hell at my side...willingly. I expect you to stay out of my way, Lilith,” I warn her, spreading my fingers

out in the thick blood. “Or I will tell her who you are. You never know, her demon monster might kill you before you could even explain yourself.”

“She is not a monster,” Lilith bites out.

“Alexandria Cameron is my perfect little monster. She just doesn’t know it yet,” I reply with a cruel laugh. “Now stay out of my way.”

“As always, your highness,” she sarcastically replies before shifting into a silky black cat with glowing purple eyes and running off into the academy, leaving paw prints in the blood.

As wolves howl, teenagers scream, and the scent of war rises in the air...I know I’m going to like this academy.

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## NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR.



Hello my lovely readers.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.!!

A big thank you to my family and everyone that supported me with this book! Thank you to my wonderful Pack Leaders for everything. <3

You're all amazing and I couldn't do this without you guys.

Happy Reading!! G. xoxo

# Stalker Manual



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

G. Bailey is a USA Today and international bestselling author of books that are filled with everything from dragons to pirates. Plus, fantasy worlds and breath-taking adventures.

G. Bailey is from the very rainy U.K. where she lives with her husband, two children, three cheeky dogs and one cat who rules them all.

A few random facts about her...

She loves tea. (She may be a little obsessed but what Brit isn't?)

Chocolate and Harry Potter marathons are her jam.

She owns way too many notebooks and random pens.

Please feel free say hello on here or head over to Facebook to join G. Bailey's group, Bailey's Pack!

(Where you can find exclusive teasers, random giveaways and sneak peeks of new books on the way!)

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