

Chapter 7: Hex

The house was empty that evening. Thomas was working late and Nick had run off in search of a drink. It was Alex, sitting in his study as he worked through the administration he had taken home. Between the endless papers and the long nights, he grasped his gaze as he sighed, leaning his brow into the palm of his hand.

For a moment, he imagined the time he'd seen his father sitting there, just like he was sitting there now. He remembered how tired he looked. He remembered how he would sneak downstairs at night to grab something to eat, only to find his father there eating stone cold "dinner".

He lifted his head to look into a mirror that stood ahead of him, aimed as if to take a picture of the room. A mirror that would never be empty, he feared.

Then he lifted his head even more to the sound of the doorbell. Quickly, he paced out of the study and locked the door behind himself, before heading into the hallway, where he opened the drawer of a side table, hand resting on a cold steel grip.

When he opened the door, the anxious expression on his face was lifted, his brow unfrowned and his eyes lighter.

Alex: "Hey... Are you okay? Are you crying?"

Dorian: "Hey Al... Sorry to come knocking, I just... Didn't want to go home."

Alex: "It's okay, just... Here."

Alex opened the door all the way now and stepped forward, pulling Dorian into a hug and placing his hand upon the other's head, as if to ward off the bad memories.

Alex: "You're so cold. When did you last eat?"

Alex gently pulled Dorian inside through the doorway and closed the door behind him.

Alex: "Actually, don't answer that. Go on, get to the couch and I'll get you something to chew on."

The blue-eyed one started to head to the kitchen, followed closely by Dorian, to his concern.

Alex: "Don't want to be alone? That's okay. Stay close."

A few moments later, Alex slid Dorian a glass of hot chocolate. Dorian, sitting on the counter, took the glass and carefully started to drink the chocolate, not bothering to wait for it to cool down.

Alex turned back to face the stove, where he was heating up some leftovers from the night before. He sighed quietly, before picking his words carefully.

Alex: "Do you want to talk about it?"

Dorian: "No... Yes, I- No..."

Alex: "Want to do the questions thing?"

Dorian: "Yes..."

Alex: "Are you injured?"

Dorian: "No..."

Alex: "Was it at the club?"

Dorian: "Yeah..."

Alex: "Did you agree to it?"

Dorian: "No- yes- It's complicated."

Alex: "Did he touch you?"

Dorian: "Yes..."

Alex: "You were paid?"

Dorian remained quiet as he pulled out a credit card, placing it on the counter. Alex noticed the red eye, turning his gaze away again when he saw Dorian getting up.

Alex: "That Overseer character, again?"

Dorian remained silent, instead standing behind Alex and hugging him, shaking softly.

Alex took a deep breath before turning around and looking the other in the eyes, both hands gently placed on his cheeks as he lifted up his head.

Alex: "Open up..."

Dorian hesitantly opened his mouth, allowing Alex to see the blood behind his teeth. Alex shivered faintly at the sight, before carefully reaching out. He firmly placed one index finger on Dorian's left canine and another on his right, before quickly yanking off the metal frame that kept the tiny syringes in place.

Alex grabbed a glass and filled it with water, before submerging the fangs and leaving them to sit on the counter.

Dorian: "He went all cold and... His eyes, Alex..."

Alex: "Don't think about that right now. Think about this, this room. Think about this."

Alex handed Dorian his hot chocolate again, this time half-full.

Dorian: "He said I'm not done yet. He said he wants to talk. I don't want to talk, Alex..."

Tears started to form in Dorian's eyes as his hands trembled. His breathing hitched as he tried to hold it, though unsuccessfully. At first it came out as a sniff, then a snicker, but then he broke down on the kitchen floor.

Alex immediately sat down next to him and pulled him into another hug, gently rubbing Dorian's back between his shoulders as he held his breath.

Alex: "Don't worry, he can't find you here. He'll never find you here."

Alex tried to comfort the other, holding him as close as he could.

Dorian: "I'm stuck. I can't get out and I don't want to go back. It's like he's got a hex on me."

Alex: "What if we go to face him together? I'm sure maybe we can have him sign you out formally or something."

Dorian: "No! No, I- Alex, he doesn't know you."

Alex: "I have friends at ForeverTech, surely we can come to some kind of understanding."

Dorian: "Alex! He doesn't know you. He can't know you. I don't want him to talk to you too. He'll talk to you and he'll never stop."

Alex: "Dorian..."

Dorian: "No! No, we won't. I need to do this on my own."

Alex: "Then at least let me help you. Let me drive you there, so I can take you home."

Dorian: "I- Okay."

Alex: "Here."

Alex dried the other's tears, looking into his reddened eyes. He lingered for a moment, whispering.

Alex: "It's late. You can take my bed for the night."

Dorian: "Al, can we- Please..."

Alex sighed and weighed the implication carefully before answering.

Alex: "Fine. Just for tonight. Wouldn't want to put a hex on you."

Dorian: "You'd never."