

The Alpha Games

- Part 1 - The Alpha Games; Chapter 1 - Betrayed by Sian Fleming

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The beautiful day was warm on Maddie's skin, echoing the joy building inside her. As she came to stop at the base of the packhouse steps, she tilted her face to the sky and closed her eyes to soak in the rays. Her grin was wide. It grew each time one of the Red Dawn wolves wished her a happy birthday, as she did her morning run around their pack. She hadn't had time to do more than shout a thank you back, but she'd be seeing them all later at the party. Twenty-five. It would be the year that would change her life as she stepped into the responsibility of her own pack, and she couldn't wait. Most of her teenage years had been spent denying her fate, but there was no running away from a birth right.

The last few years had changed her mind. *He* had changed her mind. Daniel. With him at her side, she knew they would be able to successfully rule over their packs together.

"Whatcha doing?"

A giggle escaped Maddie's lips as her friend jumped two foot in the air. She had been so focused on her clipboard that Rose hadn't even heard her coming, despite the fact she was still panting from her run. Her friend turned on her with wild eyes, panic flaring within them.

"Maddie!" Rose snapped, but the disapproval in her gaze melted away in an instant. "What are you doing here? You're meant to be on your run."

"I was, and now I'm back." She chuckled. "If you trained with me, like I suggested, you would've heard me coming."

"It wasn't like I was doing nothing." Her friend mumbled, fidgeting with the edge of her clipboard.

Maddie cast her gaze around the large hall. In only a few hours, the packhouse had been transformed into a venue fit for a king, which was good

because her dad was coming. Not that he was *technically* a king, but being the Alpha of the strongest, oldest pack in the kingdom came with its formalities. Such as, a fancy ball to celebrate his daughter's birthday. Though she appreciated the effort, it wasn't her idea of fun and she had to lock her features in a smile to keep the dread from seeping in.

Each wall was lined with rows upon rows of flowers, garish ornaments hung from ceiling and a red carpet had been laid at the entrance. Even for the Silver Moon pack, it was far too much. Maddie had cut her run short to try and do some damage control, but it seemed like she was too late.

"It looks great, Rose."

A false politeness washed effortlessly into her voice, making her friend beam momentarily before worry took her features again. She always got too worked up over these events but today she seemed worse than usual. Her eyes flitted around the room, landing on other women who busied themselves with their own work rather than aid her. Fortunately, for Rose, Maddie was there to help.

"Give me ten minutes to shower and change. I'll be back and we can sort it out together." She grinned, but Rose only paled at her words.

"No, no, I need to ask your opinion on something." Her voice was tight, urgency filling every word.

A light sheen of sweat stuck the pale wisps of hair, that had escaped Maddie's ponytail, to her forehead. She wiped at her brow, catching a whiff of the morning's efforts. She needed a shower, and she needed it now. Despite her friend's protests, she turned to the stairs and walked away with wave. "I won't be long."

"Wait..."

Rose's voice carried behind her, but she was already halfway up stairs. Maddie didn't like leaving her friend in distress, but getting a wash was her first priority. As the future Silver Moon Luna, she couldn't go around smelling like a pup who had rolled in something questionable, especially on her birthday. With the party considered a celebration of her engagement to Daniel as well, there was no choice but to be at her best all day. Too many eyes, from both Red Dawn and Silver Moon, would be on her that evening so nothing less than perfect was required. It had to be that way to ensure the union of the two allied packs went seamlessly.

When Maddie reached for the handle to their shared bedroom, she froze. A tension of warning, fuelled by her well-honed instincts, gripped her in place. The danger wasn't immediately clear. In the Red Dawn packhouse, where the Alpha and his family slept, she was in the safest building on the territory. She sniffed the air with a frown, only picking up the scents of familiar wolves. Then, she looked at the door, but there was no sign of damage or forced entry.

Then, her ears pricked. They picked up the growing sounds from the other side of the wood and her stomach churned. The unmistakable grunts and groans of fucking reached her, making her throat thicken as bile clawed at it. She felt like she was in one of Lewis' death grips with the way her chest clenched, her breath escaping her as she recognised the voice on the other side. She would recognise that voice anywhere. She had heard its same desperate moan in her ear just last night.

Maddie's whole body locked as nausea swept through her. That bastard. That fucking bastard. Every one of her muscles became taut, ready to rush in and beat the shit out of him, but she couldn't do that. Of course, she couldn't; not with so many wolves downstairs who would witness her outburst. Though, even if they were alone, she wouldn't attack him. Daniel didn't deserve the satisfaction of knowing he had hurt her.

As each groan reached her, it only solidified her resolve to get in and out of there without so much as a flicker of sadness. The way the woman moaned his name was so obviously fake that Maddie knew she was trying to be heard. Well, mission accomplished. Daniel had never been that good in bed, certainly not enough to make someone lose control like that if they were trying to stay hidden. No, that bitch was trying to get caught, trying to take him for herself. Well, she could have him.

For once, Maddie was thankful for the leadership training that her dad had drilled into her. Though anger coursed through her veins, chasing off the pain, her expression cooled to a disregard that stole any hint of emotion from her face. Taking a deep, sobering breath, and squaring her shoulders like she had done so many times before, Maddie turned the handle and pushed open the door. Immediately, her eyes locked to Daniel, taking him in in all his glory as he slammed into the woman bent over for him. A flash of surprised crossed his gaze before he smothered it and let a slimy smirk pull across his lips.

"Mads! Care to join us?"

