

# REJECTED: CLAIMED BY THE ALPHA MAFIA

## MINE TO KILL

Zane's POV:

Yusuf grabs my shoulder as he continues to laugh.

"Your offer is enticing, brother, but isn't that a little too much?" he asks, and I try to maintain my cool. "Have you forgotten where you came from? A lonely wolf boy who came into my father's home to steal my birthright."

Those words hit me like a punch to my gut, but I keep my mind focused by thinking of Kiara. All I want is to rescue her and hold her in my arms once more. I should have listened and stayed back because maybe we would be at our new place now, where Mindy would never know. They say what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, and I want to hold on to that. But I don't know if this will be the thing that ends me.

When I don't react to his taunts, his face straightens, his eyes locking on mine.

"I will give you half of the money. Then I'll keep half, take the empire, and you can borrow my men-whom you will return." When he says this, I don't think twice.

"We have a deal," I say, and the corner of his lips lifts into a grin. Then he pats my shoulder gently.

He walks toward the balustrade.

"Get me a glass jar with water and a knife!" he orders someone, then leans against the balustrade with his back as he stares at me.

What he is about to do is a ritual common in our family. The glass jar with water signifies purity, and we're about to drop our blood into it, signifying sacrifice. Whoever breaks the pact is at liberty to end the life of the other.

Soon, a man arrives with the clear glass on a tray along with two penknives. Yusuf takes one knife, slashes his palm open, shuts it, and squeezes his blood into the clear liquid, which quickly turns red. I grab the second penknife, slash my palm, and squeeze my blood into the jar.

"It is done," he says to me, but I don't reply.

I drop the penknife on the tray, then wait as my hand heals slowly. Yusuf's wounds close in the blink of an eye, but I don't bother myself with the kind of witchcraft he must have dabbled in.

"It's nice doing business with you, brother," he says, and I force a smile onto my lips. "Tell Father I hope he can survive this one," he adds, his lingering smile hinting at his true meaning.

I try not to let him get to me. I send a text to my attorney, scheduling a meeting for next week.

"The meeting is next week, and I look forward to seeing you."

That is obviously a lie. I want nothing more than for him to vanish. I wish I had another way, but taking Boris's men to the Lunar Shadow pack would only result in a mass funeral for the Malibu Mafia.

He turns around, looking down from where he is standing.

"Assemble the mutants," he says, then turns back to me with a smile. "Smoke?" he asks, and I glance at him. "Come on. This might be the last time we meet, so smoke up." I take a cigar from the pack, and he lights it for me.

I don't smoke because this could be my last time. I smoke to ease the tension in my chest. Truth be told, I would rather die than be in close ties with Yusuf again. I know Boris will be mad, but I am trying to build another empire-one that isn't corrupt or divided by Yusuf.

As he assembles his men, I smoke in silence, listening to Yusuf talk randomly about family, as if he hadn't tried to kill me a while ago. Once his men are ready, I crush the butt of the cigar and attempt to leave, but he grabs my shoulder.

"I really need you to be careful," he says, and I scoff.

"Like it wouldn't be the greatest news to you if my body were returned in a bag," I reply, and he let out a short laugh.

"You're right-I wish you were a dead man, but I wouldn't want anyone else to do that. You are mine to kill, little brother." With this, he takes his hand off my shoulder, and I walk away.

Boris's man takes the helicopter back while I get into one of the cars. We drive off, heading to Efla.

After about a day and a half of driving, we arrive in front of the gates at midnight. I place a call to Rufus, who opens them. I step out of the car when it halts.

"Hang around," I order the men, then I walk to Rufus, who is still in uniform. It's obvious he hasn't rested all day.

He lowers his head.

"I can explain, sir," he says, and I exhale deeply.

"It isn't entirely your fault, and it would be foolish to let you take on wolf warriors alone." He raises his face at my words. "You did well. Right now, our focus is finding Kiara," I say, then walk away, making my way into the house.

I go to our room and see the basket of lilies on the table. Then I notice the torn note on the ground. I bend slightly, picking it up.

"I vowed to protect you, and I will keep that vow, Kiara," I say, crushing the paper in my palm before walking out.

Rufus is in the hallway, speaking with Treasure. She greets me with a slight bow before leaving.

"I just wanted to make sure you were okay, and I'll be leaving now," I tell Rufus, whose face tightens. "Is there a problem?"

"I... I thought I'd go with you," he says, and I glare at him, contemplating.

He's my right-hand man, but he isn't a werewolf, and this is going to be a tough battle. I'm not one to show weakness, but I can't imagine not having Rufus by my side. I trust him more than I trust myself.

"Do you understand what you're asking?" I question, trying to maintain my tough demeanor. "These men aren't human, and..."

"I've trained past my limit many times, and I'm not fighting alone. We have an army," he cuts me off, and my brows furrow. "I'm sorry for interrupting you, Mr. Malibu," he adds, lowering his voice.

There's a moment of silence before he speaks again.

"You left her in my care, and this happened. It's my duty to be part of this operation. If not, I'll never be able to look at myself in the mirror knowing I abandoned her in her time of need," he says, his voice raw with emotion.

"Rufus, are you in love with my fiancée?" I ask, and his eyes widen in fear as he shakes his head.

"That is... that is..." He struggles for words. "No, sir. I'm only doing my duty as her guard. I've been taught that it's more honorable to die in service, and I'm willing to go the extra mile," he says, and I smile.

"I was kidding." I pat his shoulder. "We're leaving. The journey will take a day, so be prepared," I say as I walk away.

Treasure passes me, and I glance back to see them embracing.

"Please be safe." That's the last thing I hear from her before I leave.

I get into the car, waiting for Rufus, who joins me shortly. We drive off, heading to the Lunar Shadow pack.

"So, do you have a game plan?" Rufus asks while we're on the road.

"Launch a surprise attack. That's if Kiara hasn't told them I'm a werewolf. If she has, then we die trying," I say, shutting my eyes and leaning my head back against the seat.

There's always one outcome in high-risk situations: either you win or lose. I'm about to find out what fate holds for me. But if I lose, Kiara will live, knowing I laid my life down for her. That's the power of love.