

Chapter 93 You Had Better Not

Emily was there every passing second. She did not leave her friend's side for a moment, not even for a split second. As she sat there, she continued to wonder what would have happened to Roxanne. Lancelot had said she was involved in an accident, but he had not told her what type, or exactly how much damage it had done to her best friend.

All in all, she was glad that Roxanne was alive. She could not imagine what it would have been like to come all the way from America to London, only to hear...bad news.

The thought sent shivers down her spine as she shuddered, placing her hand on Roxanne's head in an attempt to check her friend's temperature. She had done that over twenty times in two hours.

But, Emily would have none of it. She had imagined her reunion with her friend a million times, and seeing Roxanne in a hospital bed, bundled up like an Egyptian corpse.

She could not help herself anymore. The tears she had fought so hard to keep at bay rushed to the forefront of her eyelids. Emily didn't stop them from flowing; no one was here to watch "tough old Emily" as Roxanne liked to call her, cry her eyes out like a 5 year old child whose mother had just abandoned in the middle of a playground.

Emily's grip on Roxanne's hand tightened as a stream of tears flooded her eyes.

"Roxy..." She paused, making a silly attempt to sniff back her tears.

"I'm so sorry Roxy. I'm so sorry that I let you come here. I should have stopped you from coming here. I should have told you that this place wasn't good for you. But, you were so excited for your new job, a new life, a fresh start, I didn't want to stop you from living your dreams Roxy..." She paused, and bent her head, pressing her forehead to her friend's hand.

"I should have expressed my concerns properly. Now look what's happened to you. I thought about you, every day and every night, I wondered how you were, I prayed to the universe to keep you safe. And even when your family started to come in..." Emily paused and threw her head up, to draw in a long breath. Her tears were choking her, and affecting her ability to breathe properly. Even now, as she thought about how Roxanne's family only expressed concern over her after she had left, anger boiled in the pit of her stomach.

"Your mother was the first to stop by, with Theresa. Said they wanted to see you, speak to you, since your number wasn't going through anymore. I told them, you were in a better place..." She chuckled bitterly.

"Rayla and Jonah tried coming to the house you know? First alone and then together, I gave each of them pieces of my madness. I mean, how dare they try to come for you like that? Even after everything they did. I couldn't stand them, I swear! I could have stabbed Jonah through the fucking throat. I told them we didn't live together anymore, it hurt me to say more than it hurt them to hear, I'm fucking sure of that."

Emily stopped talking and dabbed her eyes with the back of her palm.

"Now, when I return home, how am I supposed to tell them about this Roxy? What happened to you? Who did this to you? I am so sorry I wasn't here to protect you Roxy...I should have been here... "Oh please, all this mushiness is making me nauseous."

Emily's heartfelt speech froze immediately. Her eyes shifted to her best friend's face and she saw Roxanne's eyes opened, beaming with smiles. Roxanne's eyes were hollow and tired, and her face was pale, but at least, she was awake. Emily's heart soared with joy. She hurried and placed both palms on her friend's face to make sure that she was not dreaming, or hallucinating. "Roxy!"

"No more talking too much, just get this mask out of my face." Her words came out as a mumble since she was stuck behind an oxygen mask. With elated eyes and a joyful heart, Emily gladly rid her friend's nose and mouth of the hospital equipment.

"It feels so good to be alive," Roxanne joked aloud, struggling to sit up. Emily rushed to the side of her gurney and raised it up, so that Roxanne was able to sit up without much struggle. Emily still couldn't believe her eyes, not even as she rushed back to her seat.

"They said you were temporarily paralyzed...that you won't be awake till another few hours Roxanne. I...I was so worried..."

"Emily," Roxanne cut in, placing her feeble hands on Emily's. She had heard everything her friend had said and couldn't be more grateful to have someone as amazing as Emily by her side.

"I've been awake for hours now. I heard when you came in, when Lancelot left, the weird doctor woman telling you to leave my face the hell alone..."

Emily chuckled when she thought back to it, but her laughter suddenly dissolved into suspicion.

"If you've been awake all this time, then why didn't you say something?"

Roxanne heaved a long sigh. The question had finally arrived, how was she supposed to tell Emily everything she had heard in the past few hours? Roxanne had to speak to her friend, she couldn't keep this away from her. She just hoped that Emily would understand.

"I need to tell you something Em..."

Emily's eyes narrowed at Roxanne.

"Okay?"

"I didn't want anyone to know I was awake..." "Okay?"

"And I have to tell you this because I need to speak to someone and everything is just slowly driving me crazy, I do not know what to do and it's going to sound unbelievable, but you have to promise me when I say that I'm not crazy, neither have I been hallucinating and everything I'm saying is..."

"Slow down Roxy..." Emily cut in, gently brushing her fingers on Roxanne's arms to relax her. She was too tense to Emily's liking.

Roxanne listened to Emily, and the effect of Emily's skin against hers did a lot to calm her as well. She closed her eyes gently and took in deep breaths. When she was satisfied, she opened her eyes, rested them on Emily before speaking. "Apparently, we are currently living in the land of werewolves."

Emily's hand froze. She arched a brow at Roxanne, but her friend did not seem to be making a joke.

"Yes Emily. Lancelot and every other person you have met since you stepped into this city, have been wolves. Every single one of them."

Emily's jaw dropped instantly.

"You've got to be fucking kidding me."

Mixed feelings, that was what she had when she stepped out of her blue Range rover and closed the driver's door behind her.

Ava adjusted the frame of her sunshades to sit on top her nose, straightened the hem of her black dress before looking up at the mansion in front of her; the Relish house, where she was born and raised. Why did the house suddenly feel strange to her? As though it were no longer hers?

She heaved a heavy sigh before taking steps towards the door of the house. It had been months since she was last here. However, after the recent disgraceful events in the palace, she couldn't stand to be in the four walls of the Dankworth mansion anymore. She needed a breath of fresh air, she needed to be HOME.

When she got to the foot of the door, there was no butler there to welcome her. Ava could not be surprised or annoyed, she had not informed anyone she was coming after all, it was stupid to expect a welcoming party when no one was aware there would be need to welcome her today.

However, when she took two steps into the hall she had ran around as a child, sat in for French, Spanish and piano lessons, she felt a strange sense of belonging.

"Ava!" a soft feminine voice called from the top of the stairs. Ava took off her sunshades and raised her head up. Somewhere upstairs, about five feet away from her, stood her mother. Theresa Relish, the most beautiful woman Ava had ever been lucky to see.

"Mother," Ava spoke up, unsure of how to sound. Theresa smiled and hurried down from the staircase of about a hundred steps-if Ava remembered correctly.

Just when Theresa was about to speak to her daughter, a male baritone they all recognized, thundered from the top of the stairs.

"You would not touch that girl Theresa."

Both mother and child froze on the spot, their eyes rose up to meet the man of the house; their husband and father respectively; Garrett Relish.

A thick cloud clogged Ava's heart as Garrett looked down at her with disdain. Theresa did not dare to take one more step towards Ava after her husband spoke. "What are you doing here Ava? When you should be in the palace, with your in-laws?" he asked, while taking slow strides down the stairs.

Ava looked down at the floor as she spoke, with fear and heaviness in her heart.

"I have come back home father."

She was both shocked and amused when Garrett burst out laughing. As he walked down, he threw his head back in laughter, Ava stood confused. "Home? I don't think you understand what's going on here. You don't have her home here anymore."

"Father!"

"You would not question me child." Garrett now stood in front of his daughter. He raised her chin up so that her blue eyes met his.

"Your home is in the Dankworth palace, your place is beside the Alpha King. There is no room for you here anymore."

Shock flashed in Ava's eyes at her father's statement.

"Father..." She struggled to keep her tears at bay, even it choked her voice.

"You saw what happened at the ritual ground. Lancelot has a mate father, he doesn't want me. He never..."

She stopped when her father's fingers dug into her chin. Theresa's eyes widened.

"So, are you just going to sit down and do nothing about it? Are you going to give up everything you've worked and toiled hard for, all your life for one measly human to snatch it all up and reap where she did not sow? Are

you going to bring shame to your father's name after all my boasting? Are you going to forget whose child you are? Are you going to forget that it is my blood, the Relish blood that runs through your veins?"

"No," she spat out, choking on her tears.

Garrett smiled wryly and released his daughter's face.

"I am glad, because if you have forgotten, I would just have to cut you from my family's name."

Ava said nothing, she stood quiet and stared at the feet of her father.

"Royalty has never been in our family lineage, I have been the closest link we've had to the monarchy. But, I made sure everything would have to change with you, you have to give birth to a child, an alpha prince or princess. So, if you decide to go back on our plan, you would by all means, cease to be my daughter."

He moved closer to her and placed a hand on her shaking shoulders.

"Do not fret my child. I am your father after all, think of something, anything that would subtly eliminate your threat, and I would support you in whichever way I can."

Ava's blood ran cold, and even grew colder when Garrett leaned into her.

"I heard the human mate lies in the Dankworth hospital. Make a decision, and I'll pull all my resources."

Ava stayed still as her father moved away from her, leaving her with chills running down her spine, and anger boiling at the pit of her stomach.

Her father was right, she had an assignment, one that she had worked too hard to fail. Her jaw tightened as she looked up at Garrett, who stood beside his wife.

She would not fail him, she thought. She would not fail either of them.

"I would not disappoint you father."

Garrett smiled and leaned into his wife's neck, even as his hands firmly gripped her waist.

"You had better not." He threw back, without giving her a glance.