

Alpha's Rejected 51

Chapter 51 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Darius POV

I sighed and shook my head, going downstairs where my mother was waiting, along with my father and Clarissa. My mother looked concerned. "Is something wrong?" she asked, craning her head to look upstairs, expecting Sophie to appear.

"Sophie is a little tired and decided to get some sleep" I murmured, lying to them all. I could hardly say we've just argued and she's stormed off to another room, could I? Although, with their sensitive shifter hearing, they probably heard every single word that was uttered anyway.

"I'm sure she just needs some rest" my mother says knowingly, shooting a glance at her husband who nods eagerly.

Yep, they had heard it all. Clarissa just smiled and got up, dusting herself off with her hands and looking resigned "I better go back home. Give Sophie my regards and let her know that she can come visit anytime" she said quietly.

"We'll come visit soon" I assured her and she nodded tightly, giving my mother a hug goodbye. She waved to my father and then disappeared out the door.

"I'm going to bed" I muttered, hugging both my parents "I'll see you in the morning."

"Goodnight" said my mother fondly as my father hugged me tight.

I headed back upstairs and into the bedroom, stopping short at the sight of the keepsake box still strewn across my bed. With a sigh I began to put the stuff back together in the box. There were so many things that I had kept and I guess I could see Sophie's point of view. Had I come across Sophie with a keepsake box, wouldn't I have been pissed about that as well? I sighed, placing the box to the side and sat down

on the bed, my head in my hands. Why had it gone so wrong so quickly, when the honeymoon had gone so perfectly.

It was nighttime and the first night of our honeymoon. We had gone to a rather abstract hotel, and now she looked at me uncertainly with those big baby blue eyes of hers. "Do you want me to sleep on the couch?" she had asked and I had been incredulous.

She had still thought I harboured hatred towards her.

She had looked beautiful, clad in a white lacy nightgown that immediately caused a reaction downstairs to my surprise. She looked so innocent, so pure. Like an angel in disguise.

I slowly began to take off my shirt, my eyes watching her as she swallowed hard. I had gestured for her to move, to walk towards me. She had done so, tentatively. I pulled her against me, letting her feel my erection against her leg. She gulped and I took the opportunity to bend my head down and kiss her, softly, gently and then became more insistent, letting out a low growl of satisfaction as she opened her mouth to me and granted me access. She tasted sweet, divine, my cock becoming harder as I began to lightly touch her arms and back of her head.

Slowly, without breaking the kiss too much, I lifted her nightgown over her head and cupped her breast, making her inhale sharply. They were perfect, just like the rest of her. She moaned into my mouth.

"Darius."

God I loved hearing my name coming from her lips. My wolf came to the surface and my eyes flashed black.

"Get on the bed" I growled and she looked up at me, biting her lip and then nodding, obeying my instructions. I grabbed hold of her panties, my claws ripping them into shreds and then knelt, breathing gently on her mound and making her startled. My hands reached out to grasp her hips, keeping her legs firmly spread for me to look at. I sniffed her appreciatively and then slowly, began to lick at her folds, my tongue darting inside of her to taste her sweet nectar and juices. She tasted like honey, pure and golden.

"Darius" she shrieked, as I held her still, tasting her, keeping her legs spread to my gaze. She began to pant, heavily, as I began to increase the intensity of my tongue. She writhed, full of pleasure, her eyes closed as she let me continue. Gently, I placed one finger inside of her, making her give a long moan, thrusting it back and forth as I licked her.

"Oh god" she panted, "Darius it feels so good."

I wanted her to feel better than good. I inserted a second finger and curled them up, aiming for that magical g-spot. Her mouth fell open in shock as I began to thrust both fingers back and forth, firmly keeping my tongue and mouth on her. She was almost delirious now, constantly repeating my name over and over.

"Fuck, oh god, yes, Darius, oh my god" she chanted over and over, her hands scrabbling at the bedsheets, her hair now dishevelled over the pillows, her cheeks bright red and flushed. I grinned wickedly and began to pump my fingers back and forth in earnest, eliciting another shriek from her before her body began to stiffen under my attention. I could sense she was getting close, her juices flowing in earnest and began to furiously move my fingers back and forth, my other hand keeping her legs spread as she wriggled and gasped. Then she let out a loud scream "Darius", her walls clenching around my fingers as she came, hard, her orgasm ripping through her. I gently stopped and removed my fingers, licking her cream off of them with a smirk. She looked up at me, her chest heaving, her fingers slowly unclenching from the bedsheets.

"That was" she gasped and I chuckled, moving upwards to be on top of her, my eyes staring directly into hers.

"Nothing compared to this" I growled and lined myself up at her entrance. I knew that she couldn't have children and that I was her first, so I didn't bother to worry about condoms, preferring to go raw.

I waited for her to object but instead she placed her arms around my neck, moving her hips upwards to meet my cock.

"Please" she pleaded and that's all that I needed, entering her in one swift thrust that made her cry out.

I stilled, waiting for her to adjust to my rather large size and girth, waiting for her body to relax itself, before I slowly began to move back and forth inside of her, almost groaning at the feel of her tight walls

around me. She was so damn tight! So velvety. She clutched me tighter, one hand grabbing the back of my head as she thrust her head back and moaned, her hips rising to meet me in my thrusts.

She was eager, keen, moving in time with me. It felt so damn good, it was all I could do to keep myself from cumming, wanting to feel her orgasm with my cock inside of her. I began to move a little faster, my head bending down and my tongue darting out to lick and suck at her nipple, causing her to mewl in response. My hand moved to cup her breast, massaging it gently and then I leant down and began to kiss the nape of her neck, giving her a hickey and making a mark on her.

"Faster" she gasped and I obliged, moving both faster and thrusting harder.

"More" she moaned and I kept going, beginning to move at a furious pace, wondering how much longer I could possibly keep doing this. Then I felt it. Her body was beginning to tense up and her toes were curling. She was getting tighter and I moved harder, faster, deeper inside of her, until her walls fully clenched around my cock and another orgasm ripped through her.

"Darius" she screamed, and I continued to plunge inside of her, one hand going down to her clit and circling it, keeping the orgasm going for as long as humanly possible as she moaned, and gasped, and cried out, begging me to move harder. I gave a low growl, feeling myself beginning to tense and my cock beginning to tingle, swearing vehemently as I came, hard, spilling my seed inside of her. I slowly pulled out and collapsed on the bed next to her.

"That was amazing" whispered Sophie, her voice shaking as she looked at me. "I thought that you might want to share separate beds" she added shyly.

I shook my head. We had made promises to each other and I had been adamant about keeping mine. I didn't want to sleep in separate beds or rooms. Not when I wanted to make the best out of this situation. The longer I spent with Sophie, the more I realized that she was a very complex individual and not the mean girl I had thought her to be. She was kind, compassionate, loving, passionate and stunning to boot. She wasn't a horrible person, even if she had done something horrible in order to get me for herself.

I began to stroke her arm with my finger. "I thought we agreed to make this work" I murmured in her ear.

"We did" she breathed "I just didn't think you would want to straight away."

"I always keep my promises" I winked "and we're married now, so we might as well get used to one another. How about I start a shower for you" I added, seeing her wince slightly.

Maybe I had overdone it a bit? Been a little too hard with her? But she gave me a smile and a nod. "Thanks" she whispered, as I climbed off the bed and headed to the adjoining bedroom. "It means a lot to me that you're willing to forgive me" she continued.

I started the shower and came back. "I forgive you and so does Amber. What you really need to do is forgive yourself" I said pointedly as she flushed.

"That's a lot harder than you think" she muttered. There was a wistfulness to her tone which faded as she slowly got up and headed to the bathroom. I went in with her and we spent the next hour talking with each other and laughing, feeding each other dinner and enjoying the very first night of our honeymoon. The rest of the honeymoon passed by quickly, involving lots of love making and friendly chatter. Both of us grew comfortable with each other and looked forward to coming home, on the right foot and making a right go of our marriage.

I blinked, thinking back to that night and the rest of the honeymoon, happy memories flooding my mind. I smiled and looked over at the keepsake box with regret. Sophie was right, I couldn't keep it. Not when I was now married to her. It wasn't fair to her. I grabbed it and tucked it under my arm, slowly heading out of the room and knocking on Sophie's door.

"Sophie please open up" I called out and there was a moment of hesitation and silence, before the door unlocked itself and slowly crept open.

Sophie stood on the other side, her arms folded against her chest, her eyes red and puffy from crying. I felt a pang at the thought that without trying to, I had hurt her deeply. She eyed the box that I held against my chest, before glaring at me.

"I don't want to look at it" she told me angrily.

I sighed. "I know that already. I came to tell you that I was sorry and that I should have gotten rid of this before we came home from the honeymoon. Well actually" I amended "before we got married. I came to ask you something instead" I added and watched her look at me suspiciously.

"Depends on what it is you want to ask" Sophie snapped "if it's to do with the keepsake box you're holding, then I want nothing to do with it. I can't believe you kept it" she cried out, her voice full of hurt.

"I know, I know" I tried to soothe her. "What I'm asking is this. Do you want to help me build a bonfire?" I waggled the box at her and saw realization dawn on her face. I was rewarded by the biggest smile on her face as she reached over and took my hand.

"I would love to."

Chapter 52 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

I was a bit stymied, being left alone in the room like I was. I gazed out the window, staring out at the beautiful forest and the way the trees danced a bit in the wind. I could hear the chirping of birds, from their nests in the trees and could smell the beautiful pine as it drifted towards me through the open window. This place was heavenly and I opened the door to the adjoining bathroom in awe. There was a massive bathtub, sitting there, calling my name, I thought to myself with a grin, eyeing it happily. I was quick to disrobe and ensure I had a towel on hand, before filling the bathtub and sitting in it, relaxing in the water and leaning back against it, closing my eyes and letting time pass me by. I wondered, absently, where Alpha Rowan was, but was too damn relaxed to care too much.

I gently scrubbed the dirt from my body away and rinsed my face, getting rid of any makeup and smiled, splashing away quite happily. In fact, I was so engrossed in my bath, that I failed to notice the sound of the bedroom door opening, or hear the footsteps as Alpha Rowan walked across the bedroom floor. I did hear, the sound of the bathroom door opening and gasped, covering my breasts in indignation as I whirled around to face a blushing Alpha Rowan.

"I wanted to check up on you, see how you were" he said awkwardly, staring at a point above my head as I flushed, not knowing what to say or do.

"Um, I'm fine" I told him quietly "is there any chance you could wait in the bedroom?" I asked, trying to look anywhere but at him. He quickly nodded and was about to duck back behind the door, when I saw his eyes widen in disbelief. I tried not to cringe or cower away from him as he stomped inside the bathroom and almost slammed the door shut behind him. What was he doing? Why wasn't he leaving? I felt helpless and vulnerable in such a naked state. I flinched as he reached out and lightly touched my back, almost caressing it lovingly.

"Who did this?" he demanded to know and I shivered at the malice in his tone. He looked so angry, standing there, his eyes narrowed as he stared at me and for a moment I was confused, wondering what on earth it was that he was talking about. Then my own eyes widened and I stared at him in disbelief. I had forgotten all about her scars on my back from the whipping but now the memory came back, unbidden to me and I shivered.

"Who was it" Alpha Rowan hissed as I moved as far back as I could in the bath, my hands covering my breasts.

"It's nothing" I squeaked, very aware of my nudity now and how close his face was to mine. For some strange reason, I was fighting the urge to kiss the man! In this situation it was almost comical. I saw his eyes flash black as his wolf came dangerously closer to the surface.

"It's not nothing" growled Rowan, suddenly grasping my arm and yanking me upwards.

I was forced to follow his hand and stood upright, gasping, as he turned me so that he could see my bare back more clearly. His hand reached out to touch my scars, gentle, tracing them.

"It was a punishment" I said reluctantly, as he swallowed hard.

"This was more than just a punishment" he hissed "those marks or scars, were made with silver. That's only ever used on prisoners or rogues in my pack. What could you have possibly done, to warrant such a punishment?"

I swallowed hard. Now that I was out of the water, I was freezing cold and my body was trembling. I saw his eyes narrow on me and then he reached out, grabbing hold of the towel and quickly wrapped it around me, lifting me out of the bathtub. I felt my feet hit the floor and sighed, glad to be on solid ground again, even though a small part of me thoroughly enjoyed the way he had lifted me up, as

though I weighed nothing to him. He reached past me and opened the bathroom door and ushered me through, gently tugging me by the hand, until we both stood in the bedroom staring at each other.

"Um" I said hesitantly "do you think maybe you could turn your back around while I get changed?"

He seemed to hesitate, his eyes flashing black for a moment, before he conceded with a gracious nod, turning his back as I began to dry myself with the towel, grabbing hold of a pair of comfortable trackpants and sweatshirt.

"You can turn around now" I said quietly, and he turned, putting his hands in his pockets and waiting for me to speak.

"The punishment" he said calmly, although there was still a slight undercurrent of anger in his voice "what was it for?"

I stared at the ground miserable, wishing the floor would swallow me up. No such luck though. In the end I settled for the truth. "My sister fell down the stairs and my father blamed me, thinking that I threw her down or pushed her" I explained thickly, blinking back tears from my eyes.

He looked astonished and angrier than I had ever seen him. I could see his jaw clench tight, his eyes flash and his hands came out of his pockets to clench into fists. "How could he ever believe you were capable of such a thing? I feel like I've known you my entire life" he confessed "and there's no way you would ever hurt someone like that. Didn't he believe you?"

I shook my head. "You've met my father" I told him bitterly "does he strike you as the kind to believe an undesirable's words?"

"I wish I had hit him harder" he exploded, making me jump "I should have beaten that bastard to a lying pulp. Coward, fucking bastard" he roared.

I agreed with his words, but not that he had hitten father harder. After all, the man could have incited a war with his actions. He was lucky my father was too much of a coward to take him on. Or maybe father was smart enough to realize that Alpha Rowan was just that much stronger than him.

"Look it's alright" I say hastily, trying to reassure him as his eyes remained watchful, pitch black as they stared directly into mine "I'm over it" I shrug "and they don't hurt anymore."

"But your skin is now marked" he said quietly, calming down "and will remain that way."

"Lucky I'm not vain then" I say teasingly trying to joke about it. Unfortunately the joke falls flat.

"What about your sister, didn't she tell him it wasn't you?"

"She did" I tried to explain "but she was in a coma for a few days and by then I'd already been punished. Honestly, Alpha um Rowan" I stammered "it's not really that big a deal."

He closes the distance between us and lifts my chin with a finger, gazing deeply into my eyes, his own looking thoughtful. There's a scowl on his face now. "But it is a big deal" he says thickly and when I open my mouth to protest again, he bends his head down and gently captures my lips with his own. Instantly sparks fly between us and I feel tingles down my spine. He's not forceful at all, in fact he's sweet, gentle, caring as he kisses me. It's unlike any kiss I've ever experienced. Better than any I had with Darius and that's saying something.

I feel his tongue demanding access and I open my mouth to him, his tongue delving inside and caressing mine as I give a low moan, my hands gripping the back of his shirt tightly, my eyes closed. I feel his hand on the back of my neck, holding me in place as he becomes a bit more rough and insistent. I fight the urge to push the man down on the floor and climb him, the man was too damn sexy for his own good! But it's hard. I can feel myself becoming aroused and my juices begin to flow. His nostrils widen and I gulp as I realize he can smell my arousal.

But I'm not the only one that's had that reaction, as I feel his hard length across my midsection. He's fully erect and growling lowly in his throat. One of his hands begins to slowly, steadily, make its way beneath my sweatshirt and I moan out loud as his hand moves upwards to gently cup my breast. I can feel the warmth of his flesh on mine and it's bliss. I've never felt this way before and I can feel myself becoming desperate to feel his length inside of me as he deepens the kiss.

"Rowan" I moan and he stills, his body stiffening.

"Say it again" he orders and I look up at him helplessly, biting my lip.

"Rowan" I moaned again and he recaptured my lips, one hand grabbing me around the waist as I swooned. I wasn't sure just how much more of this I could take before I pushed the man onto the bed!

A knock sounds on the door, startling us both apart. "Sorry to interrupt" comes the Beta's voice from behind the door.

"You can open it" grouses Alpha Rowan, looking at me apologetically.

I take the time to come back to my senses, blushing profusely.

Beta Laurence pokes his head back through the door. "Ahem" he coughs, looking a bit awkward and highly embarrassed. I glance at Alpha Rowan whose hair is dishevelled and there's a wicked grin on his handsome face. My clothes are rumpled and I try to straighten them, while looking anywhere but at the Beta. It didn't take a genius for the man to be able to figure out what we had been up to.

"It's to do with pack business" Beta Laurence says firmly, still in the doorway. "There have been more sightings of rogues in the distance and there are more than before. Something is going on" he tells Alpha Rowan perplexed "rogues never work well in a team, but that's exactly what these ones are doing" he added bewildered.

Rogues didn't do well in a team because they too worked on a hierarchy system, with the Alpha wolf killing anyone who dared to challenge him. Considering rogues didn't like to be told what to do, most often the alpha would kill every single other wolf except for females who they didn't consider a threat to them. So for there to be a team of them? That was fascinating and interesting.

"Can I help in any way?" I ask eagerly.

Alpha Rowan looks over at me, his eyes softening and going back to normal. He shakes his head at me "thank you but you need to remain here. There;s got to be a reason for them gathering and I need to find out what it is. Laurence, I want you to contact the pack elders, they might have previous experience with this happening. No one is to leave the pack right now, until we get this figured out. They must stay within the territory" he reiterated.

Laurence nodded and then sighed. "I'll go make the call.." He disappears out the door.

That leaves just me and Alpha Rowan alone. He runs a hand through his hair, making it even more dishevelled and I let out a small giggle which makes him smile. He comes back over to me and looks regretful.

"I'm sorry we didn't really get a chance to talk" he murmurs "but we'll talk properly when we get a chance to."

"What am I supposed to do in the meantime? Just remain in this room?"

"Yes, for now. I won't have you in danger, not when I can't bear the thought of you being hurt." He sounded completely sincere.

"You barely know me though" I whispered, wrapping my arms around myself. Part of me, couldn't stand the idea of him being hurt as well. But I couldn't tell him that. He was an Alpha for heavens sake and one of the strongest ones in the country.

He reached out and wiped the lone tear away that trailed down my cheek. "I told you, it's like I've known you forever" he breathed, kissing me sweetly on the forehead.

"Be careful" I mumbled and he smiled.

"We're just surveilling. I won't be in danger."

Without another word he left and I was standing there alone. Why did I care so much for this man? Why was I so drawn to him and why did it feel like I had known him all my life? I was determined to get the answers I sought and resolved to get them the very next time that I saw Alpha Rowan again. I put a hand to my mouth which still tingled and smiled to myself. He was one hell of a kisser, I had to admit and blushed, thinking about when I might be able to kiss him again.

Chapter 53 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Rowan POV

I strode through the hallways, ignoring the curious looks I got from the doctors and nurses, heading straight towards the hospital room that I knew so well, my father sitting up in his bed and looking quite jovial and cheerful as he read a book that he held in his hands. I did however, take note of the fact that he was still clad in his pyjamas, as though he hadn't had the strength or the motivation to change, and that his hair was quite dishevelled as well.

"Rowan" he exclaimed in delight, hugging me tight as I bent over the bed "I wasn't quite expecting you today. I thought you said you would visit on Saturday" he murmured, looking confused "it's not Saturday yet, is it?" He peers out the window, as though that will give him the answer and I smile to myself.

I shook my head adamantly. "No father, it's not Saturday. I came in need of some advice" I explained, plonking myself down onto a chair and making myself comfortable, or as comfortable as I could, considering it was a hospital chair and not comfortable in the slightest.

My father immediately straightened his back, looking quite solemn. I could count on one hand how many times I had approached my father for advice, so it was an unusual request from me. Before I could speak, a blonde nurse came hustling in, grabbing hold of my father's clipboard and perusing it.

Her name tag read Nurse Stevens. She gave me a friendly smile, that grew wider, the longer her big blue eyes stared at me. I could see her eyeing me like I was some sort of fascinating male specimen. I frowned, remembering that Amber was still back at the pack house and that right now, the last thing I want is attention from yet another female. Not when I had my mate safely sequestered at home and with no idea that we were mates yet. I still had to come clean to her.

"How is he doing?" I asked abruptly and the nurse blinked at my gruff tone, obviously getting the message, for she glanced down at the clipboard and scowled to herself.

"Teddy here is doing alright. He's started to respond to chemotherapy which is a good sign and his nausea is subsiding" explained the nurse, placing the clipboard down and taking my father's blood pressure to his great reluctance. He was a good sport about it though, as he had his vitals checked every hour at the hospital.

"Great" she muttered "your blood pressure is average, so not low and definitely not too high. That's a good thing" she told us both firmly.

"How are you feeling Teddy?" she asked in concern, her big blue eyes blinking at him as she waited.

My father, turned to mush under her gaze. I can't believe it. Once he had been a big bad alpha, and now, with a pretty girl's eyes on him, he turned into a complete marshmallow. Unbelievable. But he'd always been partial to blondes, as they tended to remind him of my mother.

"I feel slightly sick" he confessed a bit sheepishly and the nurse nodded, scribbling it down in his chart.

"I'll organize some more of the anti nausea tablet you're taking" she informed him with a raised eyebrow. "Anything else? Coughing, shortness of breath, feeling dizzy?" She leaned forward, staring him directly in the eyes.

My father shook his head and she smiled, placing the clipboard back. "I'll be back with that tablet" she said quietly, turning around and leaving the room, her shoes making large clacking sounds on the hospital floor.

Whew. I let out a breath and sat back in the chair. My father relaxed slightly but looked towards me with a questioning look in his eyes. "It's about this girl" I began and he instantly laughed.

"Well what a surprise" he chuckled, "I should have known. Everything about you revolves around girls" he sounded slightly disappointed. I frowned.

"It's not like that this time" I protested, folding my arms across my chest and glaring at the stubborn old man. He could at least hear me out before coming to assumptions.

"Oh yeah" he scoffed, his eyes twinkling with amusement "then tell me what's wrong? What do you need my help with?" he asked.

I folded my hands together, thinking for a moment. How did I approach this? In the end, I settled for the truth, apologizing to Amber in my mind, feeling like I had betrayed her trust, when all I wanted was some advice from my father.

"It's about this girl" I began "her name is Amber."

"What's she like?" interrupted my father "I need to get an image of her in my mind."

I thought back to when I first saw her, a wide smile spreading on my face. "She's amazing. She has the most beautiful red hair that flows all the way down her back and to her bottom. Her green eyes are so bright and like emeralds and she has the cutest freckles over her nose and face. Her skin is like a porcelain dolls and she's short and dainty like. But she's also brave, strong and courageous. One of the bravest women I know" I said softly, remembering that she had been forced into a marriage she hadn't wanted and had been determined to go through with it anyway. Even now, not knowing what was going on, she was determined to stay and it was something to admire.

My father's eyes light up. "She sounds like a hell of a girl!" he whistles, "what kind of help do you need? Can't get a date with her or something?"

"No, its um not that" I tread lightly now "but she has some trauma that I don't know how to deal with. Whether I deal with her gently or if I treat her like any other girl I would treat."

My father frowns, his expression grave. "What kind of trauma are you talking about? Emotional, physical or" he sucks in a breath and looks sickened "sexual?"

Nurse Steven's reenters the room, halting our discussion. I wiggle uncomfortably in my chair, ignoring the small seductive look she aims my way, as she hands my father a tablet and a small cup of water to drink it down with. "Here you go" she says cheerfully, and my father grins and downs the tablet, gulping the water down and handing her the cup back.

"Thanks love" he says appreciatively, "that ought to fix it." He gives her a wink.

She chuckles and shakes her head. "You really are a charmer" she laughs, turning around and swaying her hips as she walks slowly away and out the door. I roll my eyes.

Father leans back against the headboard of the bed, eyeing me carefully. "You were telling me about the trauma" he prompted.

I sigh. Even now, when I think back to those marks on her back, I feel myself becoming incredibly angry. My hands clench into fists, an action that doesn't go unnoticed by my father. "Emotional and physical" I growl. "Her bastard of a father beat her and whipped her with silver. She has scars all on her back because of it."

My father looks shocked. "But that's a punishment for a rogue or a prisoner" he exclaims "not for some poor young girl being punished for some minor transgression. I'd like to meet this asshole" he snarled. He hates women being hit by men just as much as I do, but the thought of a father doing that to a child just incensed us both.

"Sadly he's not here. I punched him though" I said with a small degree of satisfaction. I still wish I had hit him harder though. Enough to have caused him some serious damage. But I had held myself back.

"You did, did you? Good job" my father praises me "wish I could have been there."

I wish he could have seen it to. Something tells me he would have been cheering me on for it. "The thing is" I said taking a deep breath "is that I'm afraid that she'll fear me because of her trauma. Do I handle her with kid gloves so to speak? Or what happens if I make it worse?"

My father stays silent for a moment, wriggling slightly in his bed. "I doubt you can make it worse but you should be careful when approaching her. I wouldn't get mad in her presence, especially with your wolf because that shit's scary" he said thoughtfully "and maybe don't shout but speak firmly if you need to. Don't lift a hand up or make her think you're going to strike her and maybe you could encourage her to speak to a councillor or something like that" he suggested.

Damn. Why hadn't I thought of that. I can be a real idiot sometimes, but this was why I had gone to see my father after organising the surveillance on the rogues teaming up on the edge of my territory.

"Damn, you're good" I admire my father.

He just grins and winks "you better believe it. Now tell me more about this Amber and why you are so interested in her. You care enough to ask me for advice, so she must be something special."

I fidget. His gaze intensifies. Realization dawns in his face. "You're mates aren't you" he hisses delightedly, leaning forward to stare at me.

"We're mates" I acknowledge "but she doesn't know it yet."

My father's eyes narrow "why haven't you told her? Actually scratch that" he mutters "why can't she tell? She should be able to sense the mate bond unless she has no wolf. . ." he trails off, his eyes widening as he stares at me.

"She has no wolf" I say tiredly "which is why she can't tell."

"That doesn't matter. She should feel something for you. The mate bond works whether you have a wolf or not, you just don't feel it as intensely" my father reiterates. He sounds thoughtful, his expression serious as he digests his own words.

I think back to the kiss we shared, how delicious she had tasted and the way she had responded had my cock twitching with excitement. I could hear her low moans, her panting and smell her arousal. Her body had trembled as I touched it and she had closed her eyes, in the throes of passion. It was safe to say that she felt something for me.

"Oh she feels something for me alright" I say drily.

"So what's the problem? Why not tell her? Are you ashamed of her" my father demanded heatedly "because I thought I raised you better than that."

"It's not that" I snap tiredly, running a hand through my hair "it's something else. I can't get Stacey out of my head alright? Everytime I think I'm over her, something happens to remind me of her again. I don't think it's fair to start something with Amber when I still have her in my mind and thoughts."

My father groans out loud in disappointment. "I thought you were over her" he rasped "she cheated on you son for heaven's sake. A mate is a sacred thing, given to us by the moon goddess herself. You would be a fool to let your mate slip through your fingers, for the sake of a memory" he added wisely.

I could see his point but it just wasn't that easy. My thoughts flash back to the wedding when I confused Amber with Stacy. It was like my mind had been trying to tell me something. Like I had unfinished business. OR that maybe I had been partly to blame for her cheating on me. After all, it's not like I had told her about Amber and I had been distracted a lot when it happened.

"Amber sounds like a brave girl and she sounds like a sweetheart. I would really love to meet her" my father told me eagerly.

I smile. At least he was looking forward to the next visit, even if he was asking me to bring a certain someone along. I was pretty sure that if I asked, Amber would honor his request. She was too nice and polite to refuse.

"I'll try and bring her next visit with me. I'm sure that the both of you will get along nicely."

My father lets out a yawn and I see his eyelids fluttering. He was exhausted and trying hard not to show it.

"Lie down father" I told him, moving to stand upright, hovering over him and tucking him beneath his blanket, like a parent with a small child would do.

"I'm not a child" he told me crossly and I chuckled and winked at him, enjoying the scowl he shoots my way.

"Get some rest old man and I'll come see you again soon. It sounds like you're getting better" I said, my voice dripping with gratefulness. I wanted my father to get better, to be able to come home again, instead of wasting away his life in a hospital bed. I wanted my father to reside back in the house that he had grown up in. If I could have arranged him to stay home, I would have, but he needed to be monitored carefully and round the clock and the chemotherapy was a different concoction to humans, in order to cope with our shifter dna.

"Don't forget I want grandkids" my father mutters from the hospital bed, his eyes twinkling as he looks at me "sooner, rather than later if you please. Even better if their made with your mate" he teases.

"I'll see what I can do" I told him sourly, shaking my head. I leant against the doorway. "I love you."

"I love you too son."

I turned and walked away with a heavy heart. Every time I left my father back in the room, I feared that it would be the last time I ever got to see him. Every moment I spent with him, therefore was precious and cherished. Even with the reassurances that he was getting better, it still stayed crystallized in my mind and I was careful to tell him I loved him before I left the room. Now I needed to find out how the surveillance was going and whether or not Laurence had managed to get any relevant information out of the elders. With luck, we might be able to thwart whatever the rogues had planned.

Chapter 54 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

I was quite shocked that I had my own bedroom but thinking about it, it was for the best. I didn't know this Alpha Rowan very well but I was determined that we both have a discussion together. I couldn't be left in limbo forever. Besides, I was wallowing away in self pity in this house, wondering whether Sophie had gotten back from her honeymoon and how Australia had been. I missed her, a lot as well as my mother, but not my father. I didn't miss the sneer on his face, everytime he spoke to me or the anger in his eyes whenever he looked at me. I didn't miss the little punishments he would force on me or the embarrassment he constantly spoke of in my presense, about having an undesirable as a daughter. I also didn't miss the slaps or the beatings he would no doubt have continued to inflict on me.

A knock on the door and Alpha Rowan comes back in, standing in the doorway, looking quite awkward. He clears his throat. "Ahem" he coughs "I was wondering if you would like to go on a date with me?"

I look at him incredulous. Hadn't he just told me that he wanted me to stay in the building and my room for my own safety and now he was proposing we go out? What had changed? What was going on?

Did I want to go out on a date with him? Just thinking about it sent butterflies up in my stomach and my heart began to race, my hands feeling clammy all of a sudden at the mere thought of the two of us being alone together.

I struggled to remain calm. "I would very much like that" I told him honestly, watching as his eyes lit up in excitement. I licked my lips and watched his eyes shoot to them.

"I'll come back for you in an hour" he told me gruffly, his voice hoarse and rough "if that suits you?"

An hour was not long to get ready, let's be honest. But I wasn't planning on dressing to the nines, at least not yet. I gave a small nod and he looked satisfied with himself as he began to back out of the doorway.

"See you soon" he said and vanished.

The second that blasted man was gone, I was hurrying into the bathroom to shower and do my hair. I took extra time with my makeup and then slid on a little black cocktail dress, pairing them with tights and small black ballet flats. My hair I curled and left loose down my back, my green eyes standing out amongst the black clothes I wore. I was more than a little satisfied with my reflection in my mirror. But the question was, would he like what I was wearing? I didn't know where we were going or what we were doing, and as time passed I got more and more nervous, my heart thumping wildly in my chest. My hands were shaking slightly as I placed them in my lap and sat on the bed, waiting for Alpha Rowan to come back. My mouth was dry and I swallowed hard, anticipating his arrival.

I heard his footsteps approaching before I saw him and when I did, my mouth salivated. He was clad in a pair of tight fitting black jeans and a white dress shirt, that was unbuttoned slightly and showed off his muscled chest. He had run a comb through his dishevelled hair and groomed it back and his dark eyes felt like they were piercing as he stared at me for a long moment as I wriggled awkwardly on the bed.

"If I need to get changed" I began miserably "I can, you just didn't say where we were going."

He shook his head, his expression bright "no don't" he breathed "you look absolutely divine Amber. Absolutely stunning, like a goddess" he praised and I preened, feeling a lot more comfortable in my clothes.

"If you don't mind coming with me" he said quietly, reaching out and taking hold of my trembling hand in his strong, firm one. "This way" he told me, gently tugging me so that I was forced to stand upright, following him out of my bedroom and down the stairs towards the front door.

I was perplexed. Had he gotten rid of the rogues? Had they been annihilated and disposed of? Or was he that arrogant that he considered himself enough to keep them at bay? He glanced over and read my mind. "Don't worry" he said carefully "we're not exactly leaving the pack" he added.

We walked out the front door and I shivered slightly. The air was cool and there was a slight breeze that made my hair sway in the wind. The moon was beginning to rise in the sky as the sun went down and created shadows and darkness everywhere. Luckily, even without a wolf, I had my shifter sight and could see where we were going clearly, making my way assisted by Alpha Rowan who held onto my arm and hand tightly.

Up ahead, we walked onto the grounds, my feet sinking into the lush, soft green grass, until we came to a lone tree with a picnic basket beside it and a rug set out on the grass. I glanced over at Alpha Rowan who gave me a warm smile.

"I hope you don't mind, but this was one way to ensure your safety and have time to get to know you as well."

It was perfect. I loved the outdoors and I especially adored picnics. He couldn't have planned this any better, especially with the darkening sky and stars beginning to twinkle overhead. It was as romantic as you could get.

He helped me to sit on the rug and I sat cross legged, looking up at the sky in appreciation. It was a perfect night for a picnic.

"It's so beautiful" I murmured as he began to rifle through the picnic basket.

"You're beautiful" he whispered and I stared at him, stunned, my heart skipping a beat.

He held out a goblet with wine and I took it, thanking him profusely and sipping slowly at it. "I don't know what you like to eat, but there's chicken, potato salad and some rolls" he said with a frown "not the most romantic food, really, is it. Damn Laurence, I told him to make it special" he growled.

I laughed at the image of his Beta filling the basket and having no notion of what romantic food was. It was too funny for words.

"Actually, I happen to love potato salad" I boasted and he grinned, serving me up a plate as I began to ravenously dig in. I was too hungry to pretend otherwise and he watched me appreciatively.

"It's nice to see you actually eat" he commented drily as I slowed down a little, digging into his own food "not like those annoying girls who eat like birds."

"I'm starving" I admitted sheepishly "and I don't eat like a bird."

He grins and continues to shovel in food while we sit, eating in silence. I finish my plate and put it to the side. He glances at me with a smile, lying down on the rug and inviting me to lie down there with him. I crawl over and lie beside him, Alpha Rowan rolling over slightly to place a possessive arm over me. Instantly I feel the chemistry between us, the tingles that run down my spine and the warmth of my flesh wherever he touches me. I become aroused and try my best to hide it, but his nostrils flare and he sniffs, his eyes widening in realization as I blush.

Before I can move away, he bends his head down and slowly begins to nip and kiss my neck, making me arch my back in response. He lightly touches my arm with his hand, trailing it up and down, making goosebumps appear on my skin. I'm gasping at this stage, desperately sucking in oxygen and writhing beneath him as he rolls over on top of me.

"You taste so sweet" he murmurs, "like honey."

I'm just as eager to touch him, my hands beginning to move to unbutton the top of his shirt. He catches my hands and shakes his head, tsking at me. "Now, now, I'm not finished yet" he purrs.

His hand reaches down towards my pants and before I can move to stop him, I feel him underneath my tights, pulling my underwear to the side as I shiver in response.

"Now then" he mutters "I wonder if I can get you to moan for me, like you did last time."

My mouth falls open and then I let out a small whimper as his finger finds my clit and begins to gently rub it, before circling the nub with his finger. It feels so damn good, that my juices automatically begin to flow and my hands reach down to scrabble at the rug and the grass, as though it's a lifeline.

He's slow, methodical, bending down to peer into my eyes and then kissing me on the lips as his finger continues to pleasure me. His tongue lightly licks along my lips, my mouth opening further, to grant his tongue access. His tongue delves inside and begins to caress mine, dancing with it, my legs spreading wider as I pant into his mouth.

"Oh my god" I mewl, throwing my head back as the pleasure continues to grow.

He lets out a chuckle, before he begins to increase the pressure on my clit, causing my legs to feel like they are buckling, even though I'm lying on the ground.

"Say my name" he demands.

"Rowan" I murmur throatily, "oh god Rowan."

"Yes" he hisses "just like that. I want you to scream out my name" he growls, increasing the pace of his fingers. I feel like I'm floating on air, in a haze of euphoria, unable to stop this man if I tried. Besides, it felt so good, so incredible, that I didn't want him to stop. I wanted him to continue. He begins to move his fingers in a circular motion and I swear, arching my back and shuddering.

"God, oh god" I moan "Rowan, it's too much" I begin to plead, but he takes no notice, continuing to kiss me, as I tremble beneath him. At this rate, I felt like I was going to spontaneously combust. I could feel his hardness along my leg and thigh, noting that he was having quite a reaction as well. I longed to feel his cock inside of me. My hands began to claw at his back. My body began to stiffen and sensing I was close, he began to intensify the pace and the pressure, causing me to let out a loud moan and then a scream as my orgasm washed over me "Rowan!"

I was a goner. It felt like I'd died and gone to heaven. I came crashing back down to earth as I felt him pull away from me slightly, his eyes staring deeply into mine.

"Are you alright?" he asked.

"I'm better than alright" I murmured hoarsely. He laughed and began to pull my leggings down, before halting in his tracks. "I didn't think to bring a condom" he mutters helplessly.

I shake my head. "It doesn't matter, I just want to feel you" I begged him.

He hesitated and then sighed, reaching over to pull my dress up over my head. He lays me back down and begins to kiss the nape of my neck, trailing down, until he reaches my cleavage. My body hums in response. But as soon as he reaches my cleavage, his nostrils flare and a look of sheer panic crosses his face.

"What is that smell?" he asks thickly.

I frown. Is he talking about my perfume? I had put a dab of it on top of my breasts, wanting to smell nice for tonight. It wasn't a horrible smell, so I didn't understand what had brought that look about on his face.

"It's my perfume" I said uncertainly, watching his eyes flash from black to normal and then black again. The cold air is making my nipples hard and my lacy bra remains on thank god, for he scrambles backwards and away from me. He's breathing hard, looking pointedly anywhere but at me, and it stings.

"Put your clothes back on" he breathes and I stare at him confused, reaching over to grab my discarded dress and hastily put it back on, before turning to Rowan in bewilderment.

"What's going on with you? One moment we were getting all heated and then. . ." I said trailing off.

He looks at me with fury in his eyes and I recoil. "That's none of your business" he spits out, before getting to his feet and gesturing for me to follow him.

I get angry. I don't understand his change in mood. "I can make my own way back thanks" I spit out.

He hesitates and then snarls "fine, do that then."

I watch stunned, as he turns and stomps away, leaving me alone, on the grounds, out in the darkness.

Tears prick the corners of my eyes, as I bend down and begin to shake the picnic rug off, placing the plates and cutlery into the basket. I debate taking it inside but decide that someone else can do it, or Alpha Rowan can come back for it. Either way I don't really care. I stomp off inside, making my way back to the bedroom, locking the door firmly behind me. Then I sink onto the bed and let the tears flow down my cheeks. For a first date, that had been going so well, it had certainly turned into a massive disaster!

Chapter 55 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Stacey POV

I stared, incredulous, as he stuck his hand down her pants, listening to that bitch moan for all she was worth. They didn't detect me, a testament to Celia's skill in the spell she had provided, that not only masked my scent to him and the rogues nearby, but also glamoured me to look like someone else, on the off chance that I was discovered.

Why wasn't the perfume working? It was meant to remind him of me, to confuse and bewilder him, until he realized on his own that he couldn't get me out of his mind and made him want me again. Was she not wearing it? I leaned closer and took a sniff, recoiling back as the most pungent smell of honeysuckle and roses hit my nostrils. Gagging, I leant right back and put my hand to my mouth, trying not to puke up my stomach contents. What on earth was wrong with me? Was something I ate, not agreeing with me?

Then something interesting happened. Straight after he had pulled that hussy's dress over her head, he stiffened and asked what the smell on her was. I knew it was the perfume I had left her. So she had worn it after all, I thought to myself pleased. The reaction to it was meant to be subtle and yet still entice a strong reaction from him. Clearly, it worked, because he ordered the little bitch to put her dress back on and then hightailed it out of there, like a pack of wolves was after him. She was not pleased, I saw, glaring daggers at his back and pleasing me immensely.

I watched her debating with myself. I could stumble out from my little hidey hole and attack her, but there was every chance she could beat me in human form. If I attacked her as a wolf, there was no guarantee that I wouldn't be injured as well and I'd be damned if I ruined this pretty little face of mine. No, when it came to this girl, I would have to be more clever, come up with a plan that got rid of her and opened the pathway to getting my precious Rowan back.

I silently slid past the group of rogues, who, because they couldn't smell my scent, didn't even pick up the fact that I was walking right past them as I carefully ensured not to step on anything that would make noise. I had no clue why the rogues were gathering so close to Rowan's territory. I mean, it wasn't typical rogue like behaviour that was for sure. They never worked well in teams, and generally the alpha of the group killed off anyone it deemed a threat, which was pretty much everyone except for women and children. So this was right out of the norm, and I wondered if Celia would know the reason for this happening. I would have to ask her and I made myself a mental note to do just that.

I walked slowly, taking in the sight of the beautiful full moon, stripping off my clothes and closing my eyes as I concentrated. I felt my bones crack and break, shifting and adjusting until I stood there, in my wolf form, looking out at the forest that surrounded me. What a rush. I never got tired of having my wolf with me, and it was exhilarating to run in such a form, to be as quick as I was and to be able to see what was going on for miles. I ran, my fur standing on end due to the cool breeze, my paws thudding loudly as they hit the ground, leaves crackling and branches breaking beneath my paws. I was powerful, strong and nothing could stop me. Or at least that's how I always felt when my wolf and I were in sync together. Nothing could get in my way. I was invincible. A force to be reckoned with.

It was a long trip, but so worth it. I've been coming out every second night or so to spy on my darling Rowan and see what he's been up to. I had heard the gossip and knew that he hadn't gone through with the wedding after all. I highly suspected the perfume Celia had spelled was to blame for that. But I had also been told he had hit the father of the bride in an argument! It was so like Rowan to get mad, but generally it was over things that were important to him. Which meant, I thought sourly, that this girl of his was important. It hadn't taken me long to realize him and her were mates. When I'd mentioned that to Celia though, she insisted the perfume would still work, despite the mate bond. I'd had my doubts but I had just seen the proof right in front of me. The two of them, Rowan and that bitch, were getting too close for comfort though.

Celia met me at the door to our little hideaway, a frown on her face as she glanced up at the sky. I shifted back to my human form and waited for her to speak.

"You're later than usual" she commented, moving so that I could follow her through the front door and upstairs.

I frowned. I hadn't realized she had been paying attention to my movements. Sneaky little witch. What else was she up to besides keeping an eye on me?

"He was having a picnic with the little slut in the woods" I snarled "and doing certain" I hesitated "things with her." Why couldn't I just say he was trying to have sex with the whore? It's not like Celia was an innocent who didn't know what sex was.

Celia sighed. She grabbed hold of a bunch of herbs from the cabinets in her room and motioned me back downstairs. "I told you the mate bond would still draw him to her, even with the spell I put on the perfume. You didn't interrupt them or do something stupid, did you?" she asked suspiciously. Her eyes narrowed as she stared at me.

I looked at her incredulous. Did she honestly think that I was that stupid? Scratch that, I don't want to know what she thinks of me. I shook my head instead, at her. "No, but I wanted to" I admitted, sitting down at the dining table and facing her. She began to mix some herbs into a mortar and pestle, crushing them hard. I wonder what she's making with the herbs, but am too fearful to ask. For a teenage witch, Celia could sure be moody when she chose to be. Part of it was being a teenager, part of it was being a witch on the run.

"That spell won't last forever" Celia groused, scowling down at her concoction "even if it is a pretty strong one. You're going to have to come up with a plan, if you're desperate for that man to be your prince charming" she mused.

"Of course I do and I know he loves me. He just needs time to figure that out." I was adamant that's what he needed.

"You might not have time, if she's there with him. The spell can only do so much, it's what his reaction to it that counts." Celia pointed out wisely. Damn her. Sometimes it was like she was a mature adult rather than a teenager, and other times she was like a petulant small child. It was unnerving.

"I don't know what else to do. If I am discovered on the grounds in my real form. . ." I trailed off helplessly.

"Then he'll kill you" Celia supplied with a grimace "I know, I know."

The smell of the herbs was extremely strong and suffocating. The smell in the air was making me nauseas and my eyes were watering from it. Celia looked at me concerned. God knows what these herbs were, but they smelt disgusting.

"My herbs have never bothered you before" she began, but she didn't get any further, for my stomach began to heave and I rushed upstairs, hand to my mouth, making it to the bathroom just in time to vomit up my stomach contents, into the toilet bowl.

Celia came up from behind me. "Strange" she said "you shouldn't have even been able to smell it that much, not unless. . ." she paused looking thoughtful.

"Not unless what?" I croaked out, wincing at the taste of vomit in my mouth. My stomach continued to churn and I felt miserable. Damn Celia and her herbs sometimes. She could have at least warned me about the smell.

"Well" she said lightly "not unless you're pregnant."

"Huh" I snorted "pull the other one." My voice was flat and dismissive.

"No I'm serious" she protested "when was the last time that you had your periods Stacey? I don't think you've had them since we've gotten together."

That stopped me in my tracks. It had been two months, two miserable months since Rowan had banished me and in that time...my body stiffened and my eyes widened in disbelief. Surely not. But it made sense. Why else would I have been puking from the sheer smell of something? Not to mention my breasts had been sore and tender lately. I also was extremely moody, but I'd chalked that one up to Rowan messing around with that little slut of his. But I'd also been teary for no reason at all lately. She could be right.

"I can't be" I mumbled but Celia gave me a tight smile.

"I think you are" she pointed out, "stay here" she added, turning on her heel and vanishing.

Where the hell was she going?

She came back, holding something firmly in her hand and waving it about, triumphantly. I looked closely at it and sucked in a breath.

"Why do you even have that?"

She shrugged her delicate shoulders "in case. To be honest my period was late so I grabbed one. Good thing I did too, isn't it" she said cheerfully.

I yanked the pregnancy test out of her hand and slid it open with shaking fingers, the test coming into my hand. I began to read the instructions.

"Pee on stick and wait three minutes" I murmured to myself "that sounds easy enough."

"Well go on then" urged Celia, staring at me.

I flushed. "Some privacy please Celia" I muttered "if you don't mind."

"Fine" she huffs "but hurry up."

She turns and stomps away from the room. I shut the door behind her and sit on the toilet. I'm still naked from my run and am not wearing any clothes, so I don't have to worry about any getting in the way. I hold the stick underneath me and concentrate, breathing hard as I urinate on it, before gently placing the test on the vanity and staring around the room blankly for several minutes.

A knock on the door startles me and I rush to my feet and open the door, Celia stomping her foot and waving her arms at me.

"Well" she demands "are you?"

"I don't know" I tell her numbly "I haven't looked."

"Do you want me to look?" she asks kindly but I shake my head and go back into the bathroom, grabbing the stick and holding it, my eyes closing for a moment.

Did I want this? A child to be born from my womb? A baby that would be dependent on me, as a parent, to care for it and love it unconditionally? My heart was thumping wildly in my chest and I could feel my excitement growing as I decided, that yes, I did want a child. I had no idea whose baby it was, but it wouldn't matter.

"Look at it" Celia encouraged me, her own voice a little shaky.

My eyes opened and I glanced at it, sucking in a breath. Two lines, very clear, on the test. Two lines meant that I was indeed pregnant. I felt like laughing and crying at the same time.

"You're pregnant" breathed Celia in awe.

I frowned at her. "But I don't know whether it's Rowan's child or that other moron's one" I pointed out, folding my arms across my chest.

"I can probably come up with a spell for that. All I need is something from the father, like a bit of his hair or saliva and something from you as well."

How the hell was I going to get a piece of Rowan's hair when I couldn't go near him without being killed by patrol? Celia senses my distress.

"You know this changes everything, don't you?" she asks.

I scowl at her. Of course it changed everything. Rowan was highly unlikely to want anything to do with me, unless it was his baby. Hope sizzled in my breast. Maybe the child was his, I couldn't say for certain until Celia performed her spell.

"I mean" Celia says impatiently as I glower at her "that if you turn up and tell them that you're pregnant with Rowan's baby, they're not going to kill you are they? Because it would mean . . ." she trailed off.

"Killing the Alpha's baby, which they aren't able to do" I finish triumphantly "you're a genius Celia."

She sniffed at me. "I try" she says with a sigh. "I think you're going to need a few things before you ahem" she coughs "go looking for that Alpha Rowan of yours. Shall we sit down and discuss it?" she asks and begins to tug me out of the bathroom. "Also, you might want to put some clothes on, you must be freezing and that's not good for the baby."

Chapter 56 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Rowan POV

Everything was going so well as I eased her pants down, pulling her dress over her head. But the second I leaned in too close, I caught a whiff of that perfume and it shocked me to my core. It overwhelmed my senses and as I blinked, for a moment I saw Stacey's face again, instead of Ambers. I had immediately retreated, unable to come to terms with what I was seeing and no doubt confusing the poor girl.

"Put your clothes back on" I growled, unable to look at her. What if I saw Stacey's face again instead of hers? It was so damn confusing. Why now, of all times?

It was clear she didn't understand what was going on, but she did as I asked, slowly pulling her dress back on and adjusting her pants etc. I needed to get out of there, not caring how much I was probably hurting Amber after what I had just done to her. I couldn't wait around for her. Not when my head was whirling around and I couldn't grasp what was happening to me. Why this was happening to me.

To my utter shame, I left her there. I, who had been concerned about her safety, to the point of organizing a picnic on the grounds so that she would be safe from rogues, left her there, sitting on her own, staring at my back as I hastened to the pack house. She didn't utter a sound of protest, those big green eyes of hers boring holes into my back.

It had been going so well too. She had been so responsive to me, that my cock twitched with excitement, just remembering the throaty moans she had let out. Her fingernails had clawed at my back and scratched me and she had called out my name more than once to my immense satisfaction. Why oh why, then, was Stacey at the forefront of my mind? Why couldn't she just go away? I thought I had moved on, gotten that bitch out of my head. But apparently I hadn't. The mate bond called to me, but so did Stacey.

I stomped inside the pack house and went to the study, planning on wallowing in self pity, only to be met with my Beta Laurence who was sitting there, waiting for me. He looked perplexed.

"What are you doing back so early from your date?" he asked.

I just grunted at him. "It didn't go so well" I admitted sheepishly "and what the hell were you thinking, putting potato salad and chicken in there? Where was the romance in that?"

His mouth fell open in indignation. "Excuse me for thinking you wanted real food instead of the cliché of grapes and strawberries with chocolate sauce. Next time, I'll be sure to include them" he huffed.

Damn, the thought of chocolate sauce on Amber had me getting hard again. I swore and sat down in my chair, avoiding my Beta's eyes.

Laurence sat back in his chair and folded his legs over, looking perfectly at ease. "So what happened at this date then, that it didn't go so well?" he asked with interest, his brown eyes glinting with humour. He was loving this, I could tell.

I frowned and stared down at the desk. "Well it was going well to start with" I told him honestly "she liked the food" I added as he grinned at me "we were talking and then. . ." I trailed off not sure how to word it.

"Then" prompted Laurence with a wicked grin as though he knew what happened next.

"Well we were starting to get hot and heavy and then I smelled her perfume" I said, thinking back to it.

"You smelled her perfume" Laurence said dumbly "what you didn't like it?"

I shook my head. "It's not that" I burst out frustrated "it's just that everytime I smell it, for some strange reason all I can think of is Stacey. It's weird. I don't even remember Stacey wearing a perfume like that, but I see her face instead of Amber's when I smell it. What do you think is happening?"

Laurence gives a heavy sigh. "I thought you were over that bitch" he said slowly "she cheated on you, remember Rowan. You banished her because of it."

I dropped my head into my hands "I know" I growled "but now I can't stop thinking about her. Which I hate, because I just literally left my mate sitting on the grass alone out there."

"You did what" growled Laurence, getting to his feet in a hurry. He peered out the window, just as we heard the front door open and shut.

"She's going inside" he told me unnecessarily, for I could smell her scent mixed in with that perfume of hers. We listened intently as her footsteps headed slowly upstairs, and even I winced as I could sense her sadness mixed in with a twinge of bewilderment. I really had messed up, I thought to myself sourly. She deserved so much better than me.

Laurence shook his head at me. "You need to get Stacey out of your head or you're going to ruin your relationship with your mate" he chided me.

"I know, but that's easier said than done. Plus" I said sheepishly "she doesn't exactly know that we're mates yet."

"You mean you haven't told her" Laurence said incredulously "even though she was going to marry you. Are you a complete moron or what Rowan? She's going to figure it out eventually and then she's going to be pissed off that you didn't tell her."

I sighed. I knew that too. But I was afraid to come clean to her, because I knew she would be upset with me. I was becoming quite the coward, I thought to myself sourly.

"I'll tell her when the time is right" I told him haughtily, my tone brooking no arguments.

Laurence just grimaced at me. He was right, I really did need to tell Amber we were mates and soon. I resolved to tell her the next time I saw her. That is if she even wanted to see me after what I had done to her tonight. Something told me she would not be pleased to see me anytime soon.

"Enough about that" I said tiredly, placing my hands across the back of my head and leaning backwards in my large study chair "how is the surveillance going?"

Laurence settled back down and leaned forward, his brown eyes no longer twinkling and his expression grave. "We tried to get a camera on them but they noticed it straight away and broke it. We have eyes on them but we're going to have to change warriors every few hours around the clock to keep an eye on them throughout both the day and night."

I waved my hand at him. "That;s fine, go on."

He paused and took a deep breath "from what we have seen they are working as a group. Not only are they speaking civilly to each other, I might add, which is almost unheard of, but they are working in teams to hunt, to build shelter and to track down water. It's astonishing and extremely disturbing" he added "they're definitely rogues but they aren't acting like it."

"Their eyes are red" I checked and he nodded.

"Hmmm interesting" I muttered to myself. "What about the Alpha wolf?"

"He's the large one with wild shaggy hair" Laurence said calmly, showing me a picture on his phone that was blurry, with an image of a man's face in the distance. "Not only is he delegating tasks to everyone, but he's joining in on the hunting and helping to build the shelters."

"Have they hurt anyone?"

Laurence's face went puzzled "no. Actually there have been no reports of them hunting down any pack members or injuring them. It's like they are waiting for something."

Or someone, I thought to myself.

"What about the elders, what did they have to say?"

Laurence groaned out loud. "Thanks for giving that task to me. You know I hate speaking to them, half the time they forget what they're talking about and start the whole damn conversation all over again. I had to speak to five different ones and they all have no idea on what is happening. They did ask, however, if we had a rare wolf in our pack."

"A rare wolf" I murmured "none that I know of."

"I thought the same thing" Laurence assured me "we don't have a white wolf in our pack or one with magical powers. Nobody knew has come to the pack, except for Amber and she has no wolf at all."

"Why did they want to know?"

"Because that would explain the behaviour. Rogues are drawn to rare wolves for some reason, it's like they can sense them."

"Huh. Weird. I guess we still have no answer then" I murmured, thoughtfully.

"I'll keep trying. Who knows, maybe they just want their own territory and want to form their own pack" Laurence suggested.

"You could be right. Maybe they're evolving or the Alpha actually wants to form his own pack. As long as they haven't tried to hurt anyone, all I want is surveillance done. However" I took a moment to breathe "if they should injure anyone, then we will dispose of them all. I don't care if they are male or female, nobody harms a member of my pack, is that understood?"

"Yes, Alpha Rowan" Laurence said respectfully.

Just then we were mind linked by patrol. Alpha Rowan, Beta Laurence, we have an individual heading directly towards our pack. They are a lone, single female. Should we move to intercept them?

I glanced over at Laurence meaningfully. "It looks like you might be needed to work with patrol."

"What do you want done?"

"Find out if the female is a threat or not. She might be a rogue or just foolish enough to travel on her own" I said shaking my head at the thought of a female shifter being that foolish.

"Then what?"

"You know the procedure, Put her in the dungeon until we ascertain her reason for coming here" I muttered.

Laurence sighed and then got up, heading towards the doorway. "This conversation isn't over" he warned "I still want to hear more about your so called date that turned into a disaster."

I scowled at him in response. He laughed out loud and then headed out of the doorway and through the front door. I peered out the window, watching him shift to a wolf, before he raced across the grounds, over to patrol, who should have apprehended the potential threat by now.

I relax and stare out the window, at the darkness of the night and the shimmery moon overhead. It was a full moon tonight, which made the shifters all particularly strong. It had always been that way and even the elders could not say why. I knew why. It was because the moon goddess's power was at her peak during a full moon and because she was the one who created us, we too had our powers at their peak at the same time. The stars were especially bright tonight, I thought a bit morosely, letting go of the curtain and stepping away.

Then I received another mind-link. I wondered what in the hell it was that had Laurence mind-linking me so soon after leaving.

Alpha Rowan are you there?

Yeah I'm here you moron. What are you doing? Have you apprehended the female yet?

We have, but that's why I'm speaking to you. She's insistent on seeing you Alpha Rowan and I think you might need to come out here.

Laurence just put her in the dungeon already.

I could but there's this problem, , ,

Which is?

Well you know this female specifically. You banished her almost two months ago.

Don't tell me

Yeah it's Stacey.

Kill her then. She knows the consequences for coming back here.

I would, but we can't. That's the problem. She's pregnant and she's claiming it's your child. We are unable to kill her if she's telling the truth.

Put her in the dungeon then! I thundered and shut off the mind link. This had to be a trick of some sort, I thought to myself. There was no way that she was pregnant with my child. But a small part of me reminded myself that it had been two months since I'd seen her and we hadn't exactly worried too much about protection when we were doing the deed.

Fuck, I thought annoyed, this was the last thing I needed to worry about. Now I have a mate that's upset with me, and an ex-girlfriend who's claiming that she's pregnant with my baby. What else could possibly go wrong?

Chapter 57 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

I was getting increasingly fed up, as I leaned over the toilet bowl and retched, vomiting the meagre contents of my stomach into it. Urgh it tasted disgusting and I wiped my mouth with the back of my hand and then sat back on my haunches thinking to myself. I hadn't seen, nor heard from Alpha Rowan since the first date incident and it was becoming blatantly clear, that he was either hiding himself away or just plain ignoring me. Neither was making me very happy. I flushed the toilet and then rinsed my mouth with water, before brushing them profusely. I knew I needed to come clean, but it was impossible to tell the man I was pregnant if I never saw him.

I was starting to rethink this whole damn marriage thing. For starters, I never agreed to be ignored or to be shut away. With that in mind, I skipped through the bedroom and went downstairs, Laurence blocking my way to outside as I folded my arms and glared at him. "You can't go outside" he said rather nervously.

"Well, I'm not staying inside" I told him harshly, "I didn't agree to be a prisoner. If you want me confined" I added, with a spurt of confidence "then you're going to have to put me in the dungeon."

His mouth dropped open as though he hadn't been expecting that. I held out my hands and waggled my eyebrows at him. "Otherwise" I said sweetly "perhaps you could get Alpha Rowan for me? You know, the man that brought me here" I added sarcastically.

"He's a little busy at the moment" Laurence hedged, and I stared at him, waiting for him to clarify what he meant.

"Busy doing what?" I asked suspiciously.

"Um" Laurence said quietly, his eyes glazing over, mind-linking Alpha Rowan "fine" he exhales, his eyes going back to normal "you can go out on the grounds, but you're not to step foot in the forest" he said with a scowl.

"Where is Alpha Rowan?"

"Busy" snapped Laurence and I sighed, shaking my head and stepping around him.

"Of course he is" I muttered underneath my breath "coward."

Laurence watched me silently as I stepped past him and wandered out the front door. Outside it was beautiful, with soft green lush grass and the bluest sky, birds chirping away quite happily from their nests in the distance. Pack members smiled politely at me, curious gazes following as I walked, taking my time, with no particular direction in my mind. Then I heard the shouting and wandered towards it, coming to the training ring provided, spectators sitting on the grass, watching two men grapple and fight with one another.

"Yeah, go Jared" one man shouted from his seat, as the larger of the two men landed a punch on his opponents face.

I winced as the man clearly broke the other's nose, blood spurting out of it. A woman, sitting on the ground, looked up at me and smiled as I approached.

"Hello" she said with interest, her blue eyes twinkling "you must be new to our pack. I don't think I've seen you before."

I shook my head and smiled back. "I'm new" I admitted "my name's Amber, what's yours?"

She reached out and shook my hand, her black hair bouncing on her shoulders, a friendly look on her face "I'm Tessa" she said politely.

A shout rippled through the crowd and we glanced over to see that Jared was now down for the count, a large man stepping into the ring and checking his pulse.

"Don't worry" shouted the man "he's just unconscious."

Two other men approached Jared, picking him up and moving him to the grass where he would hopefully wake up, a little worse for wear. I stared in fascination at everything going around me.

"So how long are you here for?" asked Tessa, motioning for me to join her on the grass.

I sat down next to her cross legged. "I'm not sure" I told her honestly, frowning slightly "but at this rate, it's not going to be long at all." I added darkly.

She sighed. "That's a shame, I could really use the company. No one really tends to talk to me here, they merely tolerate me" she said quietly.

I stared at her incredulous. She was so beautiful, with a pixie cut that flowed to her shoulders, her black hair gleaming in the sunlight. Her blue eyes sparkled and she had pale pink lips curled into the friendliest of smiles. She had tanned golden skin and was toned all over, like she trained a lot but she also wasn't tall, but quite dainty looking. She reminded me a little of the fae, with the way she looked and acted. I couldn't understand why no one spoke to her. Or why we were both receiving either curious glances or cold hard stares.

"Can't you tell?" she asked me softly, her voice a hushed whisper.

I had to lean closer to hear her. I shook my head in confusion.

"I'm an undesirable" she confessed sadly, looking down at the ground "I don't have a wolf, so I'm considered to be useless in the pack. It's something I'm so ashamed of. Both my parents were shifters" she said upset "but I just never received my wolf."

I laughed, I couldn't help it and then sobered quickly as she stared at me looking hurt. "I'm sorry" I apologised "I'm not laughing at you but because I too, am an undesirable" I added and watched her eyes light up, her expression thoughtful and forgiving.

"Then we can both be undesirables together" she said with glee.

Then something crossed her eyes and she leant forward, slowly examining me as I fidgeted awkwardly in my chair. "Can I ask you something?" she asked.

"Sure" I said uncertainly, feeling a bit uncomfortable at the way her eyes raked over me.

"It's just that, I'm almost sure that you are pregnant" she whispered glancing down at my stomach meaningfully.

I blushed, placing a protective hand against my stomach. "I am, but please don't tell anyone. I still have to tell someone important and I can't risk it getting out just yet" I added hastily.

This time she giggled and looked around "who am I going to tell" she said drily "the trees?"

I grinned "the trees are fine, people not so much."

"Tessa" barked the man from the training ring "are you up for some sparring?"

"That's the head warrior Max" said Tessa rolling her eyes "and what he really means is am I up for getting my butt kicked."

"You don't have to go if you don't want to" I protested but she shook her head and got up, looking back down at me with resignation in her eyes.

"Thanks, but I don't want to give them another reason to despise me" she said sighing. "Besides, it's good for me to learn to fight like this, so that I can at least defend myself."

I wholeheartedly approved of that and watched Tessa go to Max's size, the man looking like a giant next to the dwarf sized woman. He motioned another woman forward, one with long auburn hair and brown eyes, that glared at Tessa as they shook hands and began to speak.

"I want a clean fight" Max shouted, leaving the two girls alone in the ring.

I watched with keen interest as both girls glanced at Max and then at each other. I waited to see who would make the first move.

The auburn haired girl launched herself at Tessa, who managed to spring to the side just in time, her hand shooting out and blocking a roundhouse kick. Tessa then began to back away, still continuing to block the auburn girls attack. Then her own hand shot out and she managed to hit the auburn haired girl, who let out a loud hiss of anger as the punch connected with her face. Tessa looked concerned now and a bit apprehensive as they began to circle each other.

"I'm going to get you for that you little bitch" shouted the auburn haired girl.

"Kelly, language" roared Max from the sidelines.

Kelly flipped him off, flipping her long hair over her shoulder and focussing on Tessa who was looking like she wanted to bolt.

Kelly tackled Tessa to the ground, laying a flurry of punches to her sides and midsection as Tessa cried out and doubled over in an attempt to protect herself. Then Tessa kicked out, sending Kelly to the floor, with a well aimed kick to the knee, before getting back up and punching Kelly in the chest, sending her stumbling backwards several steps.

I was impressed at Tessa's fortitude. She was doing so well, considering she was up against a shifter. She had definitely downplayed her skills in fighting.

Kelly was looking pissed now, her face glaring hard at Tessa. She began to move faster, landing a flurry of punches to Tessa, who managed to block them, elbowing Kelly in the shoulder and then kicking her knee out. Before Kelly could move, Tessa landed a hard hit to her head, sending her body flying backwards, lying flat on the ground. I held my breath as Tessa stood over her, checking the girl's pulse as her eyes rolled to the back of her head. Max came striding in, looking quite pleased with Tessa, who looked more concerned about the other girl still lying there, unconscious.

"Well done Tessa" he boomed, complimenting Tessa who blushed at all the attention and stares she was receiving.

I clapped hard, startling several nearby people, who then reluctantly did the same.

Tessa smiled a little and then got out of the training ring, coming back over to me, now drenched in sweat, panting heavily as she took a gulp of her water bottle near my feet.

"You did awesome" I told her appreciatively.

"Thanks" she said a little excitedly "you won't believe this, but this is the first time I've ever won against anyone before. You must be lucky" she said sincerely.

I laughed. "I don't think I had anything to do with it" I teased "it was all you."

But she remained adamant that it was me, that I had brought her luck and no amount of protesting to the contrary would sway her otherwise.

We barely paid attention to anymore of the fighting going on, instead chatting to each other about our lives and what we each liked. I learnt that Tessa had no family to speak of and had been an orphan that grew up in the pack. She now lived alone on the outskirts of the pack and was a kindergarden teacher that worked three days a week. When she asked about me, I told her all of my history, including about Darius and how I was meant to marry Alpha Rowan. She was stunned and a little in shock.

"He hasn't spoken to you since the date?" Tessa asked with a glower. She seemed to be pretty angry on my behalf.

"No" I confirmed "but could it have been something I did? I mean" I pause and reflect for a moment on the date "one minute it was going so well and then the next. . ." I trailed off.

"Doesn't matter. He shouldn't be avoiding you" Tessa said fiercely "you know what you need to do" she added "you need to go and find him and tell him in no uncertain terms not to treat you this way. Demand answers from him. The least he can do is tell you the truth."

She wasn't wrong. I was sick of wondering what I had done for the date to go wrong, when in actual fact I hadn't done anything. Whatever the problem was, it was to do with him. Not only that, but where did I stand? Were we still going to get married? Or had he changed his mind and was too cowardly to tell me?

"I think I'm going to go and find him" I say decisively and she nods, looking at me expectantly, a wicked grin on her face.

"Tell me how it goes" she begs and I promise to let her know, having been given her cellphone number earlier. It was nice to have a friend to be able to talk to. One that was just like me, no less.

I approached the pack house with determination in my step. Alpha Rowan was going to have to talk to me, whether he wanted to or not. Not even Laurence's presense inside the front door, was going to be enough to stop me.

"Laurence" I said angrily "where is Alpha Rowan this time? I've had enough of these games, take me to him already"

"No need" came his voice from behind me, smooth and velvety and enough to cause shivers down my spine as I whirled around to face him. "I'm right here" he added.

Chapter 58 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Darius POV

I'm a little nervous as I approach Sophie, even though she gives me a large beaming smile. She looks so radiant, so poised, so elegant as always. She's perfect and she's fit in as our soon to be Luna, like she's always been there. Our marriage has gotten off to a rocky start but we've found our footing and we're going along nicely. In fact, I was here to surprise her. I wanted to take her out on a date, away from the pack and away from all our daily responsibilities and do something fun for once. That is, if she agreed to go out with me. I had my suspicions that she would.

"Darius" she said sweetly as I inhaled her scent, which smelt like raspberries and cream, some sort of perfume concoction she wore "what's going on? Am I needed?" she asked in concern, about to get up from her seat, where she sat reading a book.

I shook my head and she instantly relaxed. "Oh, then what's up?" she asked me, placing the book to the side. I glanced at it. It was of course one of those mind numbingly boring romance novels she seemed to be so fond of. Internally I rolled my eyes. Those books, as far as I was concerned, were nothing but soft porn.

"Actually nothing's up. I was actually wondering if you would like to go on a date with me?" I grinned and gave her a wink "I'm telling you now it will be loads of fun."

She seemed speechless for a second. "A date" she breathed and I watched her entire face light up "I would love to. Where are we going?" she asked eagerly, standing upright and looking ready to bolt out the front door in her eagerness.

I had to laugh. "That's a surprise" I teased and she sighed, looking disappointed but still eager. Then she glanced down at what she was wearing and frowned.

"Should I change?" she asked.

I didn't see anything wrong with what she was wearing. She wore a pair of blue jeans and a dressy white blouse with it, that further enhanced her golden blonde hair and blue eyes. She wore practical shoes, a simple pair of sneakers and she couldn't have been dressed more perfect. She always looked beautiful to me.

"You look gorgeous and no, you don't need to get changed" I told her, bending down and kissing her on the lips for a moment, time feeling like it stood still. Then I had to step back and I grabbed her hand.

"We're going now?" she asked and I nodded, tugging her towards the front door.

"If we don't we'll be late" I said with a chuckle, dragging her to my car.

I opened the front passenger door for her and helped her inside, before shutting the door and going around to the driver's side. I climbed in, Sophie fiddling with the stereo as I turned the car on and begin to reverse out of the driveway. I knew where I was going, but I couldn't wait to see Sophie's face when we got there. I would lay bets she had never been to a circus before.

I was right, Sophie's face was fascinated as I pulled up in the parking lot, opposite the large circus tent. "A circus" she said incredulously, turning to me with an eager expression on her face "I've never been to one."

It didn't surprise me, not with the parents she had. A circus was not exactly the event a wealthy family, mine included, would go to for fun. But I wanted Sophie to be more down to earth so that we could connect better with our pack members, especially those who weren't wealthy and that included going to places we wouldn't normally go to. Besides, the animals would be cute.

I steered Sophie towards the tent, handing over the tickets I had purchased earlier to the ticketman in the booth, and then we took our seats inside. I grabbed some popcorn for her and we sat there munching away as the ring man came into the centre of the tent, the hushed whispers and chatting in the crowd instantly dissipating.

"Ladies and Gentleman, welcome to Parvour Circus" he began as several clowns jumped into the ring beside him "we hope you have a great time and must ask that you remain in your seats for the entire show for your own safety."

The clowns began to jump around, eliciting giggles from the small children in the crowd. Sophie giggled along with them, clapping her hands and thoroughly enjoying herself. She loved the elephant that came in and did some tricks and oohed at the tigers as well. I spent the majority of the time staring at her, rather than at the show itself, fascinated with every change of expression and the childlike excitement she exhibited. Sometimes, I still marvelled at how lucky I was to have her, despite everything and how we had come to be together. I also still felt sad for Amber, who had been forced into a marriage she didn't want and who hadn't deserved anything that happened to her. Sometimes I felt sick to my stomach at how she had been treated.

"And now for our next trick, a volunteer from the audience is required" boomed the ringmaster and I tore my eyes away from Sophie to find him pointing at me. "Young man if you please."

Sophie shoved me. "Go on" she urged "get down there."

I was reluctant to. But in the end, with everyone's eyes on me, including the children in the audience, I stood up and slowly made my way down the seats and into the arena. The ring master's eyes were twinkling with suppressed humour.

"Alright, now it's time for you to see the man who can throw daggers with amazing accuracy" he shouted.

Wait, what.

He placed me on a large spinning wheel, restraining my arms and legs so that I too would turn with the wheel. My stomach was churning with apprehension. One wrong throw and I would end up with a dagger in my body. A large man, burly and strong with a large beard, stepped forward, several throwing knives in his hand.

"And now if you please Stuart" the ring master shouted.

I spotted Sophie in the crowd, a hand to her mouth in shock, her eyes wide as the spinning wheel began to spin. Thwack, thwack, thwack. The knives came dangerously close to my arms and legs but missed me by a hair's breath. I felt like I couldn't breathe. Then he threw the last dagger and it landed next to my head, almost implanting itself in my neck.

"Well done Stuart" roared the ringmaster as the crowd cheered and a clown let me out. I walked on shaky legs back to Sophie who was giggling wildly.

"That was awesome."

"That was the conclusion of our show, ladies and gentleman. But you are welcome to roam the grounds and go on rides and see the free entertainment provided by the carnival."

I held out a hand to Sophie, still feeling shaken. "Shall we?"

She laughed and stood up, clutching my hand tightly "we shall" she squealed, almost skipping down the stairs. She was having a great time, I noted, pleased.

We began to roam the grounds, not sure where to begin. Sophie and I went on dodgem cars, patted a host of cute animals. I literally thought I was going to have to drag her away from them, we spent so

long in the animal pen. We ate cotton candy, a lot of it and then Sophie's face turned pale as a sheet and we had to find a bathroom, where I waited outside anxiously for her to come back out.

When she did, she was still pale and I was quite concerned. "Do you need a drink or something?"

She shook her head. "No" she rasped, "just need somewhere to sit and rest."

We ended up sitting outside a food truck on the plastic chairs provided. I grabbed a hotdog, but Sophie declined any food, her skin absolutely ashen.

"Sure you don't want a drink?" I asked delicately "even if it's just water."

She looked even paler. "I don't think I could keep it down."

That was fair enough. I ate my hot dog, relishing every bite, but feeling like an asshole when I saw her shudder as I took a bite. I should have held off the food if she was sick, but my stomach was absolutely growling with hunger. Cotton candy did not make you full sadly. In fact, I swear it makes you hungrier.

"Do you think you might be" I began and then paused, not sure how to phrase it.

But she instantly read my mind. "Pregnant? I can't get pregnant remember Darius" she said a tad bit bitterly.

I fell silent. I hadn't forgotten but then it hadn't hurt to ask the question. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to make you upset."

"Sorry" she apologized "I think it was just all the cotton candy, I'm starting to feel a lot better now" she added.

But she still looked nervous and apprehensive, wringing her hands together and staring off into the distance, as though something was weighing heavily on her mind.

"Sophie if you want to talk, then we can talk. I brought you out here to have fun but that doesn't mean you can't tell me anything. What's going on?"

"Oh I want to tell you" she whispers in a shaking voice "so bad but then I think about your reaction and what you're going to think of me and I just can't do it."

I reach out and take her hand, giving it a gentle squeeze "whatever it is, it can't be that bad. Talk to me. I'm your husband now, remember. For better or worse, that was our vows. So talk to me, tell me what's on your mind."

"You'll be furious"

"You don't know that for sure" I argued, wondering what on earth she wanted to tell me. Was it some sort of family secret? Something she had done in her past? What was it? What could be so bad, that she was afraid to tell me?

"It's about Amber" she says slowly and I take a large inhale, my eyes darting to hers in shock. Why would she bring up Amber, especially on our date.

"We don't have to talk about Amber" I said hastily and she frowned, looking up at me, with a sheepish look on her face, along with something that looked extremely apologetic.

"We have to talk about Amber" she returned, "because I know something you don't and it's slowly killing me inside. I should have told you earlier, but then Amber doesn't want you to know" she vented "and it's all so hard keeping a secret when it's not right and you should have a say. . ." she paused.

I was more than a little intrigued by now. What on earth was going on that had Sophie in such a fluster? This was so unlike the cool, composed Sophie that I knew. She looked frazzled, her eyes haunted as they stared deeply into mine. She looked terrified.

"Sophie, whatever it is, we'll get through it. What is it you're not telling me" I prompted, squeezing her hand.

She looked down at the table, unable to look at me. I waited on tenterhooks for her to speak and when she did, I was shocked into silence.

"Amber's pregnant" she mumbled and I sighed.

Well that wasn't exactly the end of the world, but I could see why Sophie was upset. After all Amber had only been sent off to that man not that long ago. Hopefully he hadn't taken advantage of her, the bastard, but I couldn't see why she was so afraid to tell me.

Then she looked directly at me, hesitated and then spoke the words that would change my life forever, and make me extremely angry at her. "The baby is yours Darius."

Chapter 59 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

I felt like an idiot once I turned around and saw that Alpha Rowan was standing directly behind me. "I'm right here" he said calmly, "what did you want to talk about?" he asked.

"How about how you've been avoiding me the last few days" I shot out, irritated beyond measure. The man still looked as handsome as ever, even if his hair was dishevelled and his clothes slightly rumpled from god knows what. He'd probably been out training or something.

"I've been busy" he says, looking confused.

Huh, maybe it was all in my head then, that he was avoiding me, because the man did seem genuinely confused. Weird. I deflated like a lead balloon. Now I didn't have any reason to be so indignant.

"Well then, maybe we can have a talk" I said hopefully, as Laurence sidled past us, quietly heading towards the study.

He has the audacity to look at his watch. "Actually I'm needed elsewhere" he says and instantly I bristle, but then he adds, looking thoughtful, "Maybe you could come with me? I need to go and visit my father in hospital" he says, and instantly I feel remorse. I didn't know he had a father in the hospital. I wonder if his father is really sick and that's why Rowan looks so worried. Now I feel sorry for him.

"I would like to go with you" I said, biting my lip. "can I ask why he's in hospital?" I'm trying not to be nosy, but I am curious.

"He has leukemia", Rowan tells me, motioning for me to follow him out the front door and outside. I walked out with him, inhaling the fresh air appreciatively even though I just came from outside. The sky was still a clear blue and the sun was shining down on both of us.

"I'm sorry to hear that" I told him sheepishly as I fall into step beside him and we walked, Rowan's hands in his pockets, a grim expression on his face. I can tell that he's worried about his father, even if he doesn't express it. It's an instinctive feeling that I have, deep in my gut.

"Thank you" is all he says in reply.

We walked in silence for a few minutes, heading across the grounds until a large white building appeared in front of us, the hospital. It looks so foreboding and so cold as we get closer. Rowan goes in first and I follow behind him, walking along several long corridors as nurses blatantly stare at him and doctors merely look away. We reach a room and Rowan halts me in my tracks. "Let me go in first and introduce you" he says quietly.

I give him a small nod and wait as he opens the door to the room and sidles inside. "Father" he says jovially, and I peer through the small space in the door, to see his father, who looks remarkably a lot like Rowan, except a tiny bit older that is. He also doesn't have scars on his face, but that's the only noticeable difference to me. They could almost pass as brothers.

"Rowan, what a nice surprise" his father says back, looking delighted to see his son. "To what do I owe the pleasure?" he asks, peering at me as I stand there in the doorway.

"Well, I brought along a special visitor today" Rowan said, motioning for me to come inside.

His father's eyes light up as he rakes his gaze over me, looking me up and down. "Is this?" he begins and Rowan nods.

"It's a pleasure to meet you sir" I said politely, shaking his hand. He laughs and then pulls me in for a hug, squeezing me tightly, before letting go.

"You must be Amber" he says, "Rowan has told me all about you" he adds.

Has he now? I wonder what dear Rowan had to say about me. All good things, I hope, but there was no way to ask that politely. "What should I call you sir?" I asked him and he grimaced at me.

"Definitely not, sir" he jokes. "call me Teddy."

"Well Teddy" I said, loving the name, "what has Rowan told you about me?" I turned and, frowned at the man in question who merely looked unrepentant, plopping himself in a chair and making himself comfortable.

"All sorts of wonderful things" commented Teddy as I sat on another chair, next to the bed and next to that, dratted man, Rowan. "HE told me you were beautiful with fiery red hair and the greenest eyes he's ever seen."

I stiffen and shoot an incredulous look at a now very embarrassed looking Rowan. "He said you had freckles all over your face which he finds adorable" continues his father as Rowan blushes beet red "and that you have the creamiest pale skin. He wasn't wrong, you are extremely beautiful" gushes his father.

I blush and shoot another wry glance at Rowan who is looking uncomfortable now. Serves him right, I think, a bit viciously. It was his idea to come here and he was the one who'd revealed everything to his father. It was like karma was kicking his ass and I was enjoying every minute of it.

"So what do you like to do with your time?" I asked and Teddy grinned, pulling out a crossword. "Do you like these?" he asks and I nod, coming closer as he opens a crossword and points to one of the clues. "I'm stuck on this one, what do you think?" he asks.

Alpha Rowan POV

I don't know what made me extend the invitation to Amber to come with me to the hospital. What on earth was I thinking? Of course, my father would find a way to embarrass me. He's like that. I know that he's been looking forward to meeting Amber though, and I had promised to bring her the next time I came. Now I had kept that promise, but at the detriment of being humiliated in front of my mate.

Right now though, the two of them were getting along like a house on fire, Amber carefully reading off clues to the crossword and helping my father when he got stuck. He loved his crosswords that man. I hate them. I don't have the patience to go through the clues and then fill out all the blank letters. No wonder he was getting Amber to help him. I didn't mind though, because it meant I got to observe them both and how different it was to when Stacey had reluctantly visited my father on two occasions before stopping.

"Rowan, I can't stand to be in the hospital. Not only that, but your father hates me, I can tell. No matter how nice I am to him, he glares at me or he gets little digs in. I'm sorry but there's no way I'm going to keep visiting him" she had whined to me.

I had stared at Stacey incredulous. "I haven't seen my father be anything but nice to you Stacey. He enjoys your company, he's told me that. Can't you keep trying to come? You are going to be the future Luna after all. It's only right you should visit the man who used to be the Alpha of the pack. Besides, it's really important to me."

"No, I won't do it, Rowan, and you can't make me. It's too depressing with all these white walls and sick people. I'm sorry, but you're going to have to visit him on your own. I can't handle it. It's too much for me."

"Stacey please, as a favour to me, can't you just visit a few more times? It makes his day."

"No and that's the end of the discussion, Rowan. Stop pressuring me to do something I don't want to do."

I had let it go after that but it still plagued me how easily Stacey had managed to get her own way. My father had adored her, those two visits, and I hadn't seen any evidence of him getting any digs in or glaring at her as she claimed. She just didn't like the hospital and, while that was fair, I had been

disappointed that she hadn't been willing to visit someone who might have eventually become her father-in-law. It was after that, that I decided to hold back on my proposal, wanting to see if the woman I was going to marry might have a change of heart, but she never did.

Oh, she asked about my father from time to time, told me how sorry she was about not visiting him, but not once did she change her mind. When my father asked where she was, I was constantly forced to lie to him about her working or being busy. Because the truth was that Stacey didn't work, at least not after she met me. Anything she wanted, or desired, I bought for her and it had been that way for almost a full year until this whole Amber being my mate happened. Now I had to wonder if that was fate or something the moon goddess had planned for me, in order for me to see Stacey's true colours.

I heard laughter and blinked, coming back to myself as Amber wrote something down on the crossword.

"Yes" she exclaimed triumphantly, "I was right."

My father grins at her and then at me. "This one is a smart cookie" he tells me as Amber practically glows. "I haven't been able to get that one in weeks. Was going to give up" he added a little forlorn, before brightening. "Maybe you can help me with this one?" he asked tentatively, pushing another crossword at her. She happily begins to look it over as my father bends down to look at the clues as well.

"I'm going to go and find the doctor" interrupted them both, and my father merely nodded in my direction, all his focus on Amber and his crossword as the two of them began to read out clues to one another.

Dr Smith is not far from the room and is in fact approaching when I halted him in his tracks. I know him as one of the several doctors treating my father and he greets me politely in the hallway. "Alpha Rowan, how lovely to see you again."

"Hello Dr Smith. I was wondering how my father is going?" I don't mince words. I really need to hear that he's doing okay.

But this time, the balding man with large spectacles looked a bit downcast. I feel my heart hammering in my chest. Please, god, I pray, don't let this be bad news.

"I'm afraid the news isn't good", he begins, worried "the chemotherapy has stopped working on him, I'm afraid. We can try radiation next, but it will make him very weak and there are no guarantees. I was going to give you a phone call later today."

"Can you increase the dosage or the amount of chemotherapy he's having? Would that work?" I demanded.

The doctor sadly shook his head. "I'm afraid it doesn't work that way. At the moment, we're making him comfortable, taking care of his nausea, but at this point in time, it would take a miracle for your father to get better", he said in a hushed voice, looking very awkward and uncomfortable.

I struggled to digest his words. My father was one of the strongest people I knew. How could he not be responding to his chemotherapy now? I couldn't bear the thought of losing the man that meant so much to me. Who had been my rock, especially when we had lost my mother.

"Radiation isn't a guarantee" I whispered shakingly.

"I'm afraid not and it could end up killing him sooner, rather than later" Dr Smith said grimly, adjusting his spectacles and looking at me worried.

"The decision is up to my father", I told him numbly. "whatever his decision is, I'll support it. It's not like he's not of sound mind."

"I'll inform you as to what he decides" Dr Smith said. "is he by any chance awake?"

"He is, he's got a visitor inside, but I can get her and leave. I think this is a discussion best held with him in private", I breathed out. Deep breaths Rowan, deep breaths.

"That would be a good idea. I promise to be there for him if he breaks down or gets upset, but often a patient needs to be left alone to digest what is happening."

I walk blindly down the hallway and go back into the room, where Amber and my father are sitting and carrying on a conversation. I hated to interrupt but part of me needed to get the hell out of there. "Father" I rasp in a hoarse voice as he looked up at me "I'm afraid that Amber and I have to leave."

"Oh but you just got here" my father protested, looking upset.

Dr Smith came walking in. "I need to have a discussion with you Teddy and check your vitals."

"It's alright" Amber assured him, helping to pack up the crosswords. "We can come and visit you again" she promised.

My father's eyes light up. "You'll come visit me again?" he asks and Amber nods.

"Alright then" my father says cheerfully, giving Amber a hug and then me one as I stand there, trying my best not to cry. "I'll see you later then."

"Bye father" I whisper and Amber gives him a small wave, before we both turn around and walk out, Dr Smith checking my father's vital signs.

"Is everything alright?" whispers Amber and I shake my head resolutely.

"No" I answered, "nothing is alright anymore" and that's all I would say until we reached the pack house. Amber, wisely, decided to go upstairs, leaving me to go into my study, which thankfully was empty. I sat behind the desk which used to be my father's and put my head in my hands, grief overwhelming me. Only then, with the door shut and with complete privacy, did I let myself cry.

Chapter 60 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Stacey POV

The dungeon is cold, dank and smelly. It's utterly disgusting. I wrinkle my nose up in disgust, turning towards Laurence, or Beta Laurence as I'd been instructed to call him, in disgust. "This isn't working for

me" I whined, complaining "when am I going to be let out?" God, I hoped it was soon. I couldn't stand being down here, especially with him.

Laurence looks at me in disgust. "You're lucky you are even in the dungeon and weren't killed when we apprehended you. I don't know what you were thinking, putting your baby in danger like that" he said, his eyes raking over me in contempt. I ignored him and instead I feel a sense of satisfaction as I glare at him "it's not just my baby, it's Rowan's baby too. Which means it's the Alpha's heir, doesn't it Laurence, so how about giving me some respect" I demanded heatedly. My eyes flashed at him.

Laurence laughed out loud. "It's hard to respect a slut" he sneered ", especially one such as you. Why did you have to come back, Stacey? Why couldn't you have just left well alone? Rowan was doing so much better without you here."

I felt indignant. How dare Laurence speak to me like that! Didn't he know that I was going to be the future Luna once more? Well, then, I thought with a wicked smile, let him speak to me like this. It would only be further amusing when it came time to punish him.

"Laurence, I want out of here" I snarled, not liking that I was helpless.

He sighs and looks up at the ceiling, shaking his head. "I would have happily killed you on sight if it wasn't for that baby" he growled "now will you shut up already and just lie down or something? Maybe go to sleep, then I won't have to listen to your annoying voice anymore."

I glare at him some more, wishing I had the power to set him on fire. I wish Celia was here, she'd have turned him into a toad in an instant. A big fat slimy toad that would get trodden on by some poor unsuspecting pack member. It brought a smile to my face.

I gingerly lowered myself onto the threadbare cot, feeling the springs of the rather pitiable mattress, poke into my behind. "How long is this going to take?" I asked him annoyed. "Why isn't Rowan coming down to see me?" Surely he would want to find out for himself if this was his baby or not?

I was going to be annoying as hell until Rowan came down and spoke to me instead of being a coward and making Laurence do all the work. As it was, Laurence had been popping in and out, doing pack business or so he claimed and leaving me alone and bored for long periods of time. I suspected it was all made up, just not wanting to be near me.

I could smell dried blood in here and it gave me the shivers. I could see in my mind's eye, the man I'd cheated with, being tortured right in front of my eyes. He had died because of me and yet, I still had no regrets, other than I'd been caught of course. Damn Rowan for deciding to come home early that day. A few more hours or even one and he would have suspected nothing. Now I had that bitch to contend with as well. I bet he was with her, I thought to myself sourly. That was why he wasn't coming down.

"You know, contrary to what you might think, the world doesn't revolve around you" hissed Laurence.

I scowled at him. As far as I was concerned, it did. Or it would very soon and when I was Luna again, Laurence was a goner I resolved to myself. Even if I had to get Celia to help get rid of him.

"I need food and water" I moaned, placing a hand on my stomach in a protective gesture "you wouldn't starve an unborn child now would you" I added for extra measure.

I half expected him to mind-link, someone, in order to get the food but he clearly wanted to be as far away from me as possible, because he almost leapt to his feet in his eagerness. "Fine" he snapped, thoroughly fed up "I'll get you some food and water."

He reached over and made sure that the dungeon cell was locked first, testing it with his hand and pulling on it hard, before he released it, his skin burnt where the silver had touched his flesh.

"At least I know you're not going anywhere" he muttered under his breath, turning around and stomping up the stairs. I heard a loud thud as the door slammed shut.

I listened intently, making sure his footsteps were faded, before I whispered the words that Celia had taught me to unlock the cell and then I watched in awe as the door swung open, releasing me from my confinement and my cell. I walked through, feeling triumphant. The spell had worked, exactly as she told me it would. I was free. I hastily dusted myself down, hating the smell of blood that clung to my clothes, no matter how much I tried to adjust and dust them off. There was nothing I could do about it, the smell of the dungeon was going to cling to me no matter what, and I slowly, carefully, slunk up the stairs, the door leading up to the pack house locked. I sighed and chanted again, the door swinging open with such a loud creak that I half feared that Laurence would hear it and come rushing back. But there were no sounds of running footsteps and I breathed a giant sigh of relief, closing the door behind me and slowly making my way towards the study, careful to avoid the kitchen, where I abruptly stopped in my tracks as I heard the sound of what sounded like crying, coming from behind the study door. It was muffled

crying, as though the person was crying into their hands, but I could still make out the sounds clearly. Was it Rowan?

Was Rowan crying? I didn't understand. In all the time I had known the man, I had never seen him shed a single tear, and now he was crying behind what was another supposedly locked door. I frowned and whispered the words gently, the door flicking open and revealing a very startled Rowan who glared at me from behind his hands. I could hear running footsteps now and Laurence came dashing towards me, an angry look on his face.

"How did you get out of your cell" he demanded, scowling darkly at me. He grabbed my arm and twisted it behind my back, eliciting a small cry from me.

"You didn't lock it properly." I lied.

Rowan stood up, looking imposing and intimidating, wiping his eyes with the back of his hand. "It doesn't matter how she got out" he sighed "just let her go, Laurence, we need to have a discussion anyway."

I grinned at Laurence who reluctantly let me go and then turned and walked away, leaving Rowan and me alone in private.

"Take a seat," said Rowan, gesturing towards an armchair. I took one, placing a hand on my stomach, as his eyes shot to it. He went around and sat back down in his chair, folding his hands together and regarding me silently for a moment.

"So you're pregnant," Rowan said quietly "but is it mine?" Was it my imagination or did his voice sound wistful as he asked?

I stared at him, seething, biting my lip in my anger and drawing blood. "How can you ask that of me" I demanded growling "do you think I would have risked coming here, with someone else's baby? How stupid do you think I am?"

He stares. Silence, nothing but awkward silence. Then "I'm going to want a paternity test," he said evenly "that proves I'm the father."

"Fine" I snarl "but you can't do one until the baby is born. It's too risky and I'm not going to risk a miscarriage" I said calmly.

He nods his head in acknowledgement. "That's more than fair" he said "but the question is, what do I do with you?"

I stand up and make my way across to the desk, trailing my finger up his arm as he shudders, my voice suggestive now and dripping with sweetness "well, seems as if we're going to have a baby together, why don't we get back together again? I made a mistake Rowan, a big one, but we could move past that, go back to how things were" I purred.

He clenches his jaw. "That was then, now there are other things to take into consideration now" he bit out.

Oh, I bet there were. Like that bitch that was no doubt upstairs right now. I could smell her, her scent and it was nauseating.

I kissed him on the nape of his neck and he made no move to stop me "but we were so good together. Don't you remember Rowan? All the good times we had, the amazing sex we had together. I remember all of it, so I'm willing to bet you do too."

I nibbled on his ear and he shuddered.

"I remember how you taste" I continued "how you felt in my mouth, don't you remember?"

I turned the chair around so that he was facing me. His facial expression was hard to read but I was encouraged by his not making a move to stop what I was doing. I began to unzip his pants and his hand shot out.

"Stop" he growled, squeezing it tight.

I stopped. But it didn't prevent me from moving in closer, which is what I did. Staring deeply into his eyes. "You don't really want me to stop" I breathed, bending down and kissing him softly, running my hands through his hair. Come on, let this work. I was wearing the same perfume I'd given Amber but this one was much stronger and would make him more susceptible to it, especially given that I was the one wearing it and not that little slut.

His hands gripped me around the waist, suddenly lifting me onto his lap and I entwined my fingers in his hair, never breaking off the kiss, gyrating on top of him and causing his cock to harden beneath his pants. I broke the kiss off, staring into his eyes which were glazed and confused. "Are you sure you don't want me to taste you" I whispered, stroking his cock through his pants as he panted, and writhed. "Imagine my mouth on your cock, taking all of you in. Do you want that Rowan?"

He seemed to be beyond words at the moment, watching me with glazed and lust-filled eyes. I began to ride him slightly, eliciting a small moan from him. "Your cock inside of me, thrusting away" I continued in a hushed voice before I stiffened. I could smell that nauseating scent coming closer, the bitch had come downstairs. Damn it. I couldn't afford to break the spell he was under and I moved to kiss him, thrusting my tongue inside of his mouth and caressing it with my own.

"So sweet" I murmured, deepening the kiss as he willingly gave me access "so delicious" I moaned.

His hands began to grip my waist tightly and I sensed the girl was closer still, that scent of hers now drifting down the hallway and into the room, making my nostrils flare. I grinned in satisfaction, sitting right on top of his lap and wiggling, his cock hardening even more beneath my bottom. My breasts were in line with his eyes, which dropped down to stare at them. His hand reached up of its own accord to cup and squeeze my right breast, as I tipped back my head and let out a low moan. I could hear her footsteps as they got closer and closer.

"Oh, Rowan" I moaned out loud, pulling back and being as loud as possible "that feels so good" I added.

I was rewarded by her pale face as she took in the scene right in front of her. Her long red hair was dishevelled and her green eyes were narrowed as she stared at both of us in shock, standing right in the doorway. Rowan, of course, was too far gone to notice, his hand still on my breast. I stared at her, pretending to be indignant. She stared right back, silently.

"Do you mind" I spat out at her and Rowan stilled.

I had expected that she would turn tail and run, like any other woman or girl in her situation would do. I was not prepared for her to boldly step forward and glower at us both, nor for what she uttered from her mouth. I had expected her to cower or to blush and make her excuses. Instead, she spoke clearly and boldly.

"What the fuck is this then?"