

Alpha's Rejected 61

Chapter 61 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

I was in my room when I started feeling the most strangest sensations, pain rippling across my stomach. Initially, I panicked, thinking there was something wrong with the baby, but the pain would stop, and then I would feel warm all over my body, almost like I had a fever. It wasn't pleasant but I knew I wasn't going into heat because I didn't have a wolf. So, confused and a little bit concerned, I began to head out of the room and towards the study, intending to ask Rowan if it was possible to go to the hospital.

But he was busy. With a buxom, black-haired, green-eyed woman who was gyrating on top of him for all, she was worth. What's worse is that he was clearly enjoying it. Pain rippled through my body again and I gasped, taking a deep breath, feeling anger rise inside of me as I stepped inside, meeting the bastard's eyes. "What the fuck is this then?" I blurted out, startling the Alpha and his slut who reluctantly got off of Rowan as he awkwardly tried to stand up.

It was a big mistake because the second he stood up and faced me, it was obvious that he had an erection, something that made the other woman smirk with satisfaction as I avoided looking at that particular spot, while Alpha Rowan merely looked embarrassed and a touch bewildered. "Amber," he said, puzzled "what are you doing here?"

I glared at him "I was coming down to ask you something and came across this..." I sputtered, gesturing towards him and the woman, who stood there, smirking, her arms folded across her chest. I wanted to rip her hair out and then some. Something which shocked me, because while I was prone to violence, this was a rather sadistic streak in me coming to the surface.

"It's not what it seems," Rowan says hastily.

Not what it seems! It's blatantly clear what they had been doing and were about to do. If I hadn't interrupted them, they would no doubt be having sex right now, with me none the wiser.

"I think it's exactly what it seems" I snap, thoroughly fed up with the man.

He frowned. The woman made a move to step forward and he shook his head at her, his eyes no longer looking as cloudy as they had appeared when I stepped into the room.

"No Stacey, I think you've done enough" he barks. She stays where she is, tight-lipped, no longer smirking as she stares over at me with a glower. Huh, doesn't look so cocky now, does she?

"What is this? First, you were going to marry me, now you're not sure and then I find you about to have sex with this woman" I almost yell out in my frustration.

He sighs and runs a hand through his hair, making it more disheveled and making him look even more masculine and handsome. Damn him. "Take a seat Amber, Stacey" he ordered the both of us.

I stared at him incredulously and then with a grimace at him, sat down on the armchair, thankful that the pain I had been experiencing was at least fading, whatever the hell it was. It made me less anxious and postponed the trip to the hospital.

Rowan sat down at his desk and regarded us both. I couldn't believe what the other woman was wearing, a skin-tight little dress that showed off every single curve and her large bosom. Naturally, I noticed a bit sourly, Rowan couldn't seem to stop staring at the cow's cleavage. "It looks like we have a bit of a situation" he began and I stiffened, Stacey, doing the same. Up until now she had been silent but now she burst out "we don't have a situation Rowan. You need to get rid of this little slut, especially now that we're expecting" she purred.

Who the fuck did she think she was calling me a slut? I turned on her "Listen" I snarled "you call me a slut again and I'll be more than happy to show you what I'm capable of."

Then her other words hit me and instantly I paled. "What do you mean expecting? Is she pregnant Rowan" I demanded and he exhaled, looking anywhere but at me.

"Yes," Stacey cooed, leaning back in her chair and crossing her ankles "Rowan and I are expecting a baby together."

"Why didn't you tell me" I breathed, staring at the man with narrowed eyes "there would have been no need for the marriage, or for me to even be here. Not when you're clearly involved with someone else." Why did I feel so hurt right now? I was in pain, real physical pain, at the thought of Rowan being with someone else.

He looked frustrated now "I'm not involved with her" he growled and Stacey glared. "As for whether the baby is mine" he added and Stacey looked upset now.

"I told you that it's yours, why don't you believe me" she started to sob.

I couldn't believe how heartless he was being to a pregnant woman, even if I privately thought she was a bitch, she was carrying his child and should be shown more respect.

"Maybe I don't believe you because you cheated on me," he said a little testily as my mouth fell open.

Who on earth would cheat on this beautiful-looking man? Apparently Stacey. Whoa. This was some heavy stuff and apparently, they still hadn't cleared the air, both of them glaring at each other and ignoring me.

"I cheated on you because you stopped showing me any affection, Rowan. You went so distant on me and cold. Like I'd done something wrong, but you never actually came and had a discussion with me. You just detached yourself and I was left in the cold" she snarled. "So if I cheated on you, it was because I was lonely and fearful that you had gotten tired of me. I thought you were going to break up with me."

"There was a reason I was distant" he thundered "I was dealing with my sick father, a girlfriend, and coming to grips with. . ." here he paused and I leaned forward, wanting to know what it was but he didn't finish the sentence. His face paled.

"Coping with what Rowan" I prompted softly as his face softened and he looked at me. But he still didn't speak. Instead, Stacey took the opportunity to complete his sentence.

"Oh don't you know," she said in mock surprise and a lot of sarcasm in her tone of voice "Rowan was coping with learning that he had found his mate."

His mate. The words reverberated in my mind but I still wasn't clear on what Stacey was trying to say. Weren't she and him mates? I was bewildered and puzzled.

"You found your mate" I repeated as Stacey rolled her eyes at me "then where is she?"

Stacey laughed out loud. "You hear that Rowan" she hissed "she wants to know where your mate is. Should I tell her" she threatened.

Rowan finally found his voice "Stacey, don't" he began thickly, but Stacey wasn't having it.

"You're his mate" she snapped at me as I recoiled "but you can't feel the mate bond as much because you're a pathetic weakling of a shifter who has no wolf. Which means the mate bond isn't as strong for you. Not like it is for him. He's known the whole damn time Amber, who you are, and he never bothered to tell you. What do you think that means" she said smoothly, her eyes widening as she brought home what she was saying.

I flinched and stared with anger at the man who had brought me here, without marrying me, leaving me alone in the bedroom for days at a time without a qualm and he was supposedly my mate? It couldn't be true. Please god, I prayed, feeling my body beginning to tremble with rage, please don't let it be true.

He saw the look in my eyes. "Damnit Stacey you just had to put your foot in it," he said icily. He made a move toward me and I backed away, shaking my head.

"Alright fine" he exhales "I'm your mate alright" he admitted gruffly.

"How long" I whisper shaking in my boots "how long have you known?"

He hesitates. Stacey just shakes her head at him. "Just tell her" she urges, with glee.

"Since the first meeting at the bookshop," he says heavily, his eyes repentant, his expression apologetic and remorseful. Not that I cared about that. "You lied to me" I accused him, my voice shaking "you could have told me weeks ago that we were mates. Unless" I said out loud, the rage still boiling inside of me "unless you were planning on rejecting me?"

Oh my god, is this his plan? To reject me and leave me all alone without a mate? So much for the sacredness of the so called mate bond.

Well, that seemed to stun him. He blinked, Stacey, muttering to herself under her breath, looking anywhere but at me.

"I don't know," he said hoarsely, "this situation is difficult, to say the least" he murmured.

Complex would be an understatement, I thought to myself fiercely. I was pissed. Was he planning on just leaving me here, so that he had a choice between the two of us? Like hell, I was not going to stand for that. Then again, I thought a little guiltily, I hadn't exactly come clean to him either.

"In that case, there's something I should tell you," I told him, ignoring the bitch beside me.

He nods and sits down, and myself doing the same. The rage was still there, simmering under the surface, but part of me had calmed down in the face of what I was about to reveal to him. I hadn't intended to keep it a secret from him, I'd had no choice thanks to my parents, but that didn't make it any better. I was guilty of doing the exact same thing he had.

My hand goes protectively to my stomach and before I can utter a word Stacey lets out a startled gasp, her eyes shooting to my stomach. There's a victorious look in her eyes. My stomach churns with nerves.

"Oh my god," she says with shock "you're pregnant."

Rowan's eyes shoot to mine, his eyes turning pitch black. "Is that true?" he asked in a dangerously soft tone of voice.

I hesitate, but the cat's out of the bag now and so I nod, watching as his eyes continue to flash black and then back to normal, realizing his wolf is dangerously close to the surface.

"You deceived me" he thunders.

"You mean like you deceived me" I hissed back, my nails digging into the palms of my hands and drawing blood "a bit like the pot calling the kettle black, isn't it?"

"Your parents" he realized "they knew and they still agreed to a marriage between us. They were going to make me care for another man's child" he snarled "and make me look like a fool."

"You're doing that all on your own," I told him honestly, standing upright and glaring down at him as he stared at me, his jaw clenched tight and ticking. He was angry, but so was I.

"Reject me" I demanded "reject me and let me be free. You have a woman who is carrying your child. You should marry her" I added, turning and addressing Stacey "that's what you want isn't it?"

"Yes" Stacey said with honesty, giving a shrug "he should have to take responsibilities for his actions, shouldn't he? Plus, this would be his biological child and therefore the heir to taking over the pack one day. This child deserves to know it's father."

Exactly. That's what I was thinking, but Rowan didn't like the two of us being in agreement.

"I'm not rejecting you" he snapped and then turned to Stacey "and I'm not marrying you. For now, you will stay in the pack house, while you are pregnant and we will come up with an agreement. One that suits us both. I don't even know if this child is mine" he growled.

He turned to me. "There will be no rejection, is that clear," he said, using his Alpha tone on me. "You will not leave, you will not try and run away. You will stay until we decide what to do" he added.

I can't believe the bastard used his alpha tone on me. Even without a wolf, it would work on me and he knew it. It meant that I had no choice now, I was stuck here in this house because of what he had just ordered me to do. I couldn't run away and I couldn't leave. He had effectively just made me a prisoner while he decided what he wanted to do! I was so angry at that stage, that I couldn't see straight.

"You son of a bitch" I said coldly "I swear to god, karma better bite you in the ass, or the moon goddess kicks it because if that alpha tone didn't work on me, I'd be doing it right now."

He just stared at me miserably as Stacey gave a huff, not liking my tone of voice. I turned and stomped out the door, heading straight upstairs. Normally I would pack by now, but I couldn't because of his orders. I couldn't even reject him either because he had stated there would be no rejection. I was stuck and I realized with horror, not just with him, but with his side piece as well. Life was truly unfair, I thought miserably, locking my door and curling up in a ball. What was I going to do now?

Chapter 62 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Rowan POV

I stared at Amber's back as she stormed from the room, slamming the study door shut behind her, so hard, it almost came off its hinges. I can't believe I just did that to her. I actually used my alpha tone on her, to get what I wanted. I felt like a complete bastard, and Stacey wasn't helping matters, by being here and causing complications. I wanted to do the right thing, but I was stuck in the middle. I would never abandon a biological child of mine, no matter who the mother was. But to go so far with Amber? It was so unlike me and yet my wolf was satisfied, agreeing with my actions wholeheartedly.

"Rowan" whined Stacey "just get rid of her already. She doesn't want to be here, so why did you use the alpha tone on her?"

I stared, wanting nothing more than to wrap my hands around her neck and throttle her. If she wasn't pregnant with my so called child, I would have done.

"She stays" I said flatly and watched Stacey's face change to something cunning.

"But you don't want her, do you Rowan" she breathed, grabbing hold of something from her handbag and spraying it directly onto her cleavage, the smell permeating the air. I blinked confused, the smell overpowering and familiar. I could smell honeysuckle and roses and it made me dizzy and lightheaded. All I could focus on was Stacey and her face.

"I do want her" I mumbled, confused, trying to keep to the conversation.

"No" whispered Stacey, swaying her hips and sauntering forwards, her face inches from mine "you don't. You want me, badly, Rowan, bad enough to get rid of that little bitch" she hissed.

"Get rid of her" I mumbled, repeating the words. I swayed, feeling myself stumble on solid ground, grabbing hold of the desk to keep myself upright and standing. Why was I feeling so weak all of a sudden?

"Yes" whispered Stacey with a wide smile on her painted lips "you and I belong together" she continued "just you, me, and the baby. She's not having your baby, I am," she said sweetly.

Gods, what was wrong with me? Why did I feel so weak all of a sudden, so powerless? It was like I was mesmerized by Stacey. Everything was upside down and I couldn't seem to get a grasp on what I was doing. Or what I wanted.

"We can be a family" she continued, her lips still curved in a smile "wouldn't you like that Rowan?"

"A family" I muttered "just you and me and the baby."

"Yes" she whispered triumphantly, coming closer still, whispering in my ear as I took another whiff of that strong and intoxicating perfume "a family. You'll have the heir you've always wanted" she continued thickly "the child or grandchild that your father is so desperate for you to have" she prompted.

"My father, grandchild" I repeated dumbly. My father did want a grandchild desperately and I knew that if I told him the news, he would be ecstatic to learn that there was one on the way.

"Kiss me" she whispered and I leaned down to do just that, kissing her softly, her lips tasting like honey and sweet, her mouth opening to grant me access. Then there was a knock on the door, startling us both apart and I blinked, shoving away from Stacey in a sudden rage. What the fuck had just happened? How had she gotten me under her spell once again?

"Alpha Rowan" came Laurence's voice from behind the door. "I need to speak with you, it's a matter of urgency."

"Come in" I ordered gruffly, readjusting my clothes and scowling over at Stacey who had reluctantly stepped back, her eyes narrowed on my face, her expression one of haughtiness.

Laurence came barreling in and stopped short, seeing that Stacey was still there. She smirked at him, Laurence narrowing his eyes and staring at her with contempt and disgust in his eyes. He never had been a big fan of her, I remembered and he was making it blatantly obvious now that he still wasn't.

"I would prefer we talk in private" Laurence said uncertainly and Stacey's eyes flashed, her mouth opening to protest.

I held up a hand to stop her before she could so much as utter a word. "Thank you Stacey but I think that will be all for now. I gather you know where the guest rooms are and can choose one for yourself?" I asked drily.

Her eyes flashed and her lips curled downwards in a pout "I thought I would be sleeping in your room" she protested.

I shook my head. Like hell, she would be. She could go in a guest room until I knew what to do with her and with Amber. I'd really gotten myself into a sticky situation and I had no idea what I was going to decide. I knew one thing though, Amber must be really pissed off with me and while part of me didn't blame her, another small part of me reminded me that she had lied, right to my face, and not told me about her pregnancy.

"Rowan" Stacey complained, "I'm going to be the mother of your child, I should be sleeping in the same room as you."

"It's not happening," I told her bluntly, meaning every word. "Now leave and go and choose a guest room to sleep in. You will stay here until I make a decision about what to do, but be warned Stacey" I threatened, narrowing my eyes and gazing directly into her unblinking ones "this doesn't mean we are back together and it sure as hell doesn't mean that you're going to be Luna. Now get out of my sight already" I growled, gesturing towards her.

She looked shocked for a moment, then closed her mouth and gave me a grim nod. She grabbed hold of her handbag, putting it over her shoulder, and then stormed from the room. I wondered about the fact she had no luggage and sighed. No doubt, she would need money for new clothes and as the potential

father of the child she was carrying, I was going to have to provide that. But it also begged the question, why had she come back, with no clothes on her and where had she been staying all this time? I resolved to find that out from her later.

Laurence carefully shut the door and locked it, waiting until Stacey's footsteps faded away, before plonking himself down on a chair and staring at me with a raised eyebrow and a grimace on his handsome face.

"What the hell was that?" he burst out "if I hadn't interrupted you, what would have happened?"

I shook my head and glared down at the table. " I don't know, I have no idea what's going on with me. All I know is that I can't stop thinking about her and when we touch, it's electric. I lose all sense of myself and what's going on around me" I muttered "She's like an aphrodisiac, a drug that I can't get enough of" I complained.

"She cheated on you, remember" Laurence pointed out wisely, giving a huff of indignation and leaning back in his chair.

"What was the emergency?" I asked, suddenly remembering his words.

"Oh that" Laurence suddenly looked sheepish "there isn't one. You were just taking an awfully long time in here and I wanted to know what was going on."

"You could have just mind-linked me" I growled, but he grinned at me unrepentingly and held up his hands in surrender, laughter in his eyes.

"Where's the fun in that?" he said grinning. "Now spill, is the baby yours?"

"I don't know" I whispered to him, not wanting to be overheard and not bothered to mind-link "she seems sincere though Laurence. I won't know the truth until the baby is born. But what if it is mine?" I asked. "I have to do right by the baby, regardless of who it has for its mother."

"Doesn't mean you have to marry her or do something stupid like that. Whatever you do, do not make her Luna" he said adamantly, looking out the window "the pack is not as fond of her as you might have believed, especially with the whole cheating on you thing."

"I have to do what's right for my baby though and if that means making her Luna. . ." I trailed off, not liking the thought of that.

Laurence sighed. "What about your mate though Rowan? Amber is here as well and she stomped right past me earlier, looking like she was about to cry. What was that all about?"

I looked at him guiltily. "She's pregnant as well" I declared, leaning back in my seat and scowling darkly at him "it turns out her parents didn't see fit to inform me of that before organizing the marriage that didn't go through. It's another man's child of course, not mine."

"She's pregnant" Laurence looked incredulous and a little bit of mirth crept into his eyes "well would you look at that. That's a hard decision you're going to have to make" he added.

"Tell me about it" I murmured, looking and feeling miserable. "I used my alpha tone on her."

"You used your alpha tone on Amber? What did you tell her to do?"

"I told her there would be no rejection and that she couldn't leave or try to escape from here."

Laurence let out a slow whistle. "Whoa man, that's really harsh. Especially since you might not want to keep her as your mate. It's like keeping her a prisoner" he said a little bewildered "why would you prevent her from leaving, when she's carrying another man's child? Shouldn't that be up to her?"

"I don't want her to leave until I know what I want" I snarled and he gave a small nod, not looking pleased with me at all, but wisely deciding not to say anything further to enrage me.

"Well, while I have you here, we need to go over the schedule for patrol and payslips, etc. Unless you have something better to do?"

My eyes met his and he cocked his head at me, waiting. The tension grew in the room, but so did my rage. My hands were shaking as I suddenly upended the desk, finally losing my cool completely.

"Whoa, Rowan," Laurence said, jumping out of the way in time "cool down man."

"How can I cool down, when she's carrying another man's child" I hissed, my eyes turning pitch black, my hands shaking in anger "she lied to me damnit Laurence. She's made a fool out of me."

I had no idea where this was coming from but it was like I suddenly erupted and all the pain, hurt, humiliation, and anger I'd been bottling inside just came tumbling out. "My mate is pregnant and it's not with my child" I hissed, feeling possessive and annoyed.

Laurence held up his hands. "Just remember," he said delicately "that she didn't know you were mates, and definitely not before she got pregnant from the sounds of it. You kept that from her too." He was trying to make me calm down but it wasn't working. I was too far gone in my rage.

"It's not as bad as letting another man impregnate you" I snarled and he grimaced, clearly at a loss for words.

I was indignant, angry, rage simmering underneath everything. I was fed up with it all. I was tired and exhausted and my brain was going into overdrive. I had two ladies under my roof pregnant and sworn enemies to each other, one an ex-girlfriend I never thought I would have to see again and the other one my mate. It was laughable. The thing of comedies, only I wasn't laughing. I was suddenly furious at them both, but more furious at my so-called mate for lying so long. My hands clenched into fists.

"Rowan" Laurence tried once more to get my attention, but I was breathing heavily now, my wolf just as upset as I was, both of us full of anguish at our mate's betrayal or what we considered to be a betrayal. Before Laurence could make a move to stop me, and that was a joke because even a beta cannot prevent an Alpha from doing what he wants, I stormed from the room and headed directly towards my mates bedroom, not stopping in my tracks and not bothering to knock when I reached it.

Chapter 63 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

I was crying on my bed, feeling absolutely wretched and angry, let's not forget about angry, when there came the sudden sound of loud thumping footsteps approaching and then, my door literally flew off its hinges as Alpha Rowan broke it down. Was he crazy?

"What on earth" I cried, getting to my feet and staring at him incredulously. Had he lost his mind?

Boy did he look pissed. I thought we had had enough of arguing, but apparently, that wasn't the case. His hands were clenched into fists and he was breathing heavily like he'd just run a marathon or something. There was sweat dripping off his brow and behind him, I could see the very nervous face of Laurence. Not that Laurence was interfering or anything, he was merely watching what was going down. Coward.

"You betrayed me" boomed Alpha Rowan.

I was more than a little angry myself right now. Was it too much to ask for privacy around here? I mean, considering I couldn't leave, it was the least he could fucking do. Goddamnit.

"Get over yourself" I snarled, standing tall, even as he towered over me. Damn, he was big. But I wasn't about to be intimidated, just because of his size. Even without a wolf, I would not be cowed. I stared at him, directly into his eyes, my own eyes blazing.

"You just used your alpha tone on me or did you forget already," I said sarcastically, folding my arms and giving him what for: "I can't leave you, bastard, so why don't you do me a favor and get out of my room." I was fed up with this man already and now he was provoking me further. I eyed Laurence, but the other man's face was grim, tentative, as though he feared approaching the alpha in the current mood he was in. He was going to be no help at all I thought to myself, as I glared at the Alpha.

"You're nothing but a liar" he accused me, pointing his finger at me. "Who did you open your legs for you slut? Was it that bastard Darius?"

I gave a shocked inhale, while Laurence face-palmed himself, watching the scene wide-eyed. "Oh man" whispered Laurence to himself "not cool man, not cool at all."

"Are you trying to tell me that you're a virgin" I countered back, shaking my head "because I just met your ex-girlfriend who is pregnant with your child. How dare you imply I'm a slut, you man whore" I hissed. My hands clenched into fists. I was close to hitting the man. He had some nerve!

Laurence was eyeing the both of us with fascination and looked nervous. As well he should because right now my infamous temper was coming out. "If I could reject your sorry ass I would," I told him hotly "you're a right bastard and you don't deserve me!" I exclaimed.

"How dare you" thundered Alpha Rowan, advancing on me as I backed up a few steps, not wanting him to invade my personal space. "You don't get to decide what I want to do with my life" I snapped "nor did you have any right to confine me to your pack. The second I work out a way to get the hell out of here, I'm done."

His eyes were constantly flashing between black and his normal color, indicating his wolf was continually rising to the surface. I didn't care. It didn't scare me. I was used to my father who was a real piece of work. Alpha Rowan was nothing compared to him, I realized to myself, perhaps being a tad bit naive or maybe arrogant was the right word. Yes. I was being arrogant.

"You think you can walk away from me" Alpha Rowan said incredulously, with a hint of possessiveness in his tone. The possessiveness in his gaze made me shudder as he reached out a hand and firmly tucked it under my chin, making me look at him. "You think you can call the shots, little girl" he whispered, his eyes now pitch black and no longer continuing to change. His wolf had taken over. "Think that I will let you get away with everything, but I won't" he hissed, and then he leaned forward.

I froze where I stood, a foolish move to make, but my feet were planted on the floor and my body was beginning to tremble. Laurence was still in the doorway, looking at me helplessly, not wanting to approach the alpha when his wolf was in control and I couldn't blame him for that. At first thought, I assumed he was leaning into kiss me, as one arm wrapped around my waist and I struggled uselessly in his grasp, his grip strong, stronger than I was, pulling me in towards him until my face was inches from his. His eyes gleamed with satisfaction. "I think I know what I want now" he purred as I tried to lean backward, tried to move him, shove him, anything that might work. I felt his other hand pull the hair back from my face a little and then he sniffed me, licking the nape of my neck. My eyes widened in horror and I looked towards Laurence, begging him to help me, suspecting that I knew what Alpha Rowan was about to do next and not wanting any part of it. 'Help me' I mouthed to Laurence but he shook his head, looking at me remorsefully. "I'm sorry but I can't" he whispered, apologetically as I glared at him.

I flinched as I felt his mouth on my neck, my arms moving to try and push him away, but he laughed at my attempts, shaking his head. "So weak" he murmured, his breath on my neck, "but so beautiful" he muttered to himself.

I felt his canines as they pushed out of his mouth and the tip of them at my neck and further attempted to get away.

"Don't do this" I begged, pleading with him, my voice shaky now and my confidence has completely gone "please, god, don't do this Rowan." Anything but this I thought to myself miserably.

He just looked at me with his dark eyes, a small smile curved on his lips. "I'm not Rowan" he growled simply and then I felt it, the most excruciating pain I have ever felt as he bit down, hard, blood trickling down my shoulder. The bastard had not been gentle. He continued to bite down as I struggled, before going limp, conceding defeat, tears trickling down my cheeks. I had dreamed of the day when I might be marked by a loving husband or mate, and this had now been taken away from me. He slowly, carefully withdrew, and then licked the wound clean, looking satisfied.

But the pain didn't lessen. If anything it grew worse and I dropped to the floor, curling up in a foetal position, screaming at the top of my lungs. Laurence came rushing in as Alpha Rowan's eyes returned to normal.

"What the hell did you do to her" I heard Laurence shout at Alpha Rowan.

"Oh my god" Rowan whispered, kneeling beside me. I smacked him on the shoulder, but he merely winced and continued to stay there. "I'm so sorry, so sorry. I can't believe he took over and marked you" he added.

It was more than a little late for apologies. My stomach churned and I turned my head and vomited, Rowan leaning out of the way, Laurence just staring down looking pale. I had no clue what was going on, only that the pain was neverending and I was becoming warm, the heat almost overwhelming me and becoming intolerable.

"It hurts" I whimpered and Rowan made a move to pick me up, but again, I shoved him away.

"Damn it Amber, let me help" he growled in frustration but I shook my head, being stubborn in between screams. I curled up into a tighter ball, hating him, hating Laurence, and hating myself. I should have left when I had the chance, instead of staying and letting myself be used like this. Now I had been marked against my consent and I was angry and full of bitterness as well. If I could have plunged a knife into Rowan right then, I think I would have. That's how full of rage and violence I was feeling.

The pain intensified and then I screamed as I felt my ankle suddenly move of its own accord, breaking and then moving. My eyes widened. Oh shit, this can't be happening, I thought dazed and confused. Rowan looked over at Laurence and then stood up, shifting the bed to the side. "I can't believe it" I heard him shout to Laurence "but I think she might be shifting."

Was I shifting? Is this what the pain was? I had heard that the first transformation or shift was painful and this was extremely painful. Another bone broke and I screamed, feeling the urge to vomit again. My hands scrabbled for something to grip, claw at, my nails digging into the floor.

"Alright Amber calm down" soothed Rowan, kneeling beside me once more as I glared up at him "you need to go with it and not work against it."

Easy for him to say, something told me his transformation was not this painful and why was I suddenly shifting anyway. As far as I knew I didn't have a wolf so what had suddenly brought this on? Then I gasped as realization dawned. He had marked me and caused this to happen! Another broken bone, more whimpering from me. It felt like it was going on forever, my bones slowly breaking one by one as I screamed, shifting slowly, the heat continues to build until I felt like I might erupt or explode. Then just as quickly, the pain was gone and I was standing there, staring at a wide-eyed and opened-mouthed Laurence and Rowan. I blinked, my eyes focussing on everything. I felt massive, my paws as I lifted them, appearing to be huge. I was white, snow white and as I looked in my reflection I saw that I had the most amazing purple eyes as well. I was white all over. I had never seen a white wolf before and hadn't even known they existed, but the proof was right in front of me.

I was fascinated with myself. My wolf began to speak to me. My name is Lilac and it's very nice to meet you, child. It's been a long time but worth the wait, don't you think?

Did this happen because he marked me? It's nice to meet you too Lilac but I'm kind of angry right now.

I understand and yes, this is because he marked us. His alpha blood mixed with our own and was enough to set off your transformation and bring me to the surface.

So what. What he did was still wrong.

I know child and I am very angry at our mate too. But you need to go back to your human form now, because this shift took a lot out of you. We are a special wolf, one that's rare and unique. Just like you.

How do I go back to being human? What do you mean we're special and unique? In what way?

I'll tell you when the time is right. For now though, in order to go back to being human, you need to picture yourself as human, all the way from the color of your hair and eyes, to the tips of your toes. Do you think you can do that?

Of course.

I had to stop speaking to Lilac in order to picture myself as human. I pictured my red hair, my green eyes, my pale skin and everything else I could think of, while Rowan and Laurence stared at me like complete idiots. Slowly, I began to shift, wincing at the sound of bones shifting and readjusting. Thankfully, this time it didn't hurt so much, and I was more than a little relieved to find myself standing there in human form again. Even if I was naked. My clothes had ripped when I shifted. Rowan's eyes fluttered a bit and he gasped. "You're a white wolf, I can't believe it" he gaped.

I gave a shrug and gave him a dirty look, while Laurence hovered in the doorway again, a puzzled expression on his face. I wondered what he was thinking about.

"I guess I have you to thank for it. If you hadn't marked me then I never would have shifted" I snapped, still pissed at him.

He looks at me with remorse, but I don't want to hear it. "Please leave," I say coldly, very aware that I no longer had a door for privacy "I would like to rest now."

He opens his mouth as though about to protest, but Laurence grabs hold of his arm and begins to urgently whisper something in his ear. I see Alpha Rowan frown and then glance at me. "For what it's worth, I'm sorry," he says quietly before allowing Laurence to drag him from the room. I scowl at the

open door and then a wave of dizziness overcomes me and I stagger to the bed, climbing in carefully, and close my eyes, letting the darkness overtake me.

Chapter 64 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

I can't believe he marked me without my consent. The bastard. I don't care how much he wants to blame his wolf, he did the wrong thing and the least he could do was admit to it.

"I can't believe you're a white wolf" breathed Tessa, her eyes wide as saucers "I've never heard of one before. Let alone heard of any legends to do with them."

"Maybe it's just the same as having a normal-colored wolf" I suggested lightly, feeling a bit uncomfortable. I wasn't quite sure that my wolf was anything special, even if Lilac argued to the contrary, adamant that we were. Wouldn't there be more stories about white wolves if that were the case?

"Did you hear about the rogues?" asked Tessa, leaning over her kitchen counter, her eyes full of worry.

Both of us were sitting in her kitchen, having a cuppa and just chatting away, feeling lazy and just glad for the company of the other.

"No," I said quickly, putting my cup of tea down "spill, what's going on with the rogues?" I demanded. I wondered what on earth they had done now.

She took a deep breath. "There are all sorts of rumors about them. I've heard they've stolen a few children from a different race and are prepared to kill them if they don't get what they want."

That sounded horrible. "What are they asking for?" I asked.

"That's the thing, no one knows. I mean, it's just gossip at the moment, but they have moved from their previous location and now there are no signs of them. It's like they've vanished into thin air."

I didn't like the sound of that. I would much rather know where the rogues were and be able to avoid them than have them magically disappear and risk running into them in the forest. Not that I could go in the forest, I thought to myself scowling, since Alpha Rowan had used his alpha tone of voice on me. Bastard. God, I was still pissed about that and wasn't going to get over it anytime soon.

"What kind of children have they taken? I mean what race?" I clarified, my eyes interested, a pang of sympathy in my heart. If it was true, their parents were probably going through hell. They must be worried sick about their children. What kind of cold-hearted maniac takes children, hostage?

"Vampires," said Tessa in a hushed whisper, her eyes narrowing "and vampires do not take things like this lightly. I can't imagine what they are thinking?"

I shuddered. Vampires were dangerous creatures and highly possessive. This would incite a war, if the rogue didn't give the children back.

I wondered why they had taken vampire children and how they had managed it. IT had to just be rumors, there was no way they were that organized they'd managed to steal from under a vampire's nose.

"Anyway," Tessa said with a shrug "that's what I heard."

Lilac spoke to me, adding her thoughts to the conversation. Vampire blood is extremely potent and has incredible healing powers. IF they have taken vampire children, I guarantee it has something to do with that. Perhaps they are trying to heal someone? But then they are shifters, so why would it be needed? Unless it's a disease that can't be cured?

I frowned. There was very little that vampires could not heal. Same for shifters. I thought for a moment about poor Teddy who was still stuck in the hospital, undergoing chemotherapy for leukemia. His spirits had been high, but his shifter blood was unable to heal him. Perhaps one of the rogues was really sick and really desperate? Either way, they had some guts taking vampires. Vampires were bloodthirsty and vengeful creatures. They wouldn't hesitate to track down the rogues and kill them. Part of me hoped they did, it would be the very least the bastards deserved.

"Hey," I said suddenly "do you know if there's a library nearby?"

Maybe they would have books on white wolves. Tessa sighed and shot me a wry glance. "There is but it's in town," she said slowly. "I don't know whether it would count as you trying to leave or escape though" she mused "especially if you have every intention of coming back."

She looked at me a little wistfully "do you think that maybe if I got marked, then I would get my wolf?" she asked me.

I hesitated. I wasn't sure. I mean, if it could happen for me, then maybe it could happen for other undesirables. There was no way to tell for sure. I didn't want to get her hopes up but I didn't want to crush them either.

Your friend is an undesirable, I think that you should mark her.

Ew, gross Lilac, she's a friend, I don't think of her that way!

You are an idiot, marking her will not make her your mate or lover. It will however, mix your blood with hers and will allow for her to be able to bring her wolf to the surface. It is one of the powers we possess. But it's up to you if you even want to use it.

Are you saying that I can give Tessa her wolf?

Duh. That's exactly what I'm saying, Amber! Weren't you listening to me?

I stared at Tessa wide-eyed. She looked at me, biting her lip and looking sheepish. "Sorry, I don't mean to upset you," she said quickly "forget I asked."

I shook my head. "That's not it. Lilac just spoke to me, she told me I should mark you" I said slowly, my eyes narrowing on her pale face.

"Mark me? Whatever for?"

"She says it will bring your wolf to the surface," I said quietly "one of the powers I possess apparently. But you don't have to do this Tessa" I added hastily "she could be wrong." Or it could be dangerous, we didn't know what would happen once she was marked.

But Tessa's eyes were shining with hope and excitement as she glanced at me shyly. "I want to try" she bursts out " I mean, you know what it's like, being despised for being an undesirable. Always feeling like you're being snubbed and bullied. If I can get my wolf. . ." she trails off and I understood exactly what she was trying to convey to me.

I had spent my whole childhood being despised, for my red hair and green eyes, in comparison to Sophie with her blonde hair and blue eyes. When I didn't get my wolf, my family became even worse and the pack looked down on me, like I was a piece of garbage, sneering at me and treating me like I didn't belong. If it hadn't been for Darius, I suspected I would have had it much worse than I did. His presence had assured that for the most part, that I was merely glared at from a distance, but Tessa, she would have had it much worse, being an orphan in a pack that despised her. I shuddered, thinking about all the things she must have gone through.

"Alright," I said reluctantly, pulling myself out of my thoughts "how do I do this?" I murmured, eyeing Tessa's neck as she cocked her head and bared it to me in submission. I eyed the nape of it and saw how smooth and unblemished her skin was.

"Just bite me," Tessa said helpfully as I rolled my eyes at her.

Just envision your canines coming out and then gently bite her, before licking the wound closed. That's it. It's quite simple really.

Lilac made it seem very easy. I approached Tessa slowly, watching as she began to tremble slightly before me.

"This might hurt" I whispered and she smiled, looking over my shoulder, her jaw clenched, determination etched on her face.

"I know" she whispered back "and I still want you to do it."

I pictured my canines, feeling them as they slowly came out of the top part of my mouth, and then gently leaned down, my canines just above her shoulder. I could do this, I thought to myself, willing myself to do it. Tessa stayed perfectly still, thank god, and before I could think too much about it, I swiftly bit down on her shoulder, clamping down as she gave a small cry, drawing blood. It tasted metallic and I grimaced as I slowly withdrew, licking the small wound on her shoulder closed.

"Now what?" asked Tessa bewildered.

I shrugged. My own transformation had happened minutes after that bastard marked me. Would it be the same for Tessa?

I expected to see a small tattoo on her shoulder, but instead the wound had completely knit itself closed and there was no sign of where I had marked her. I had a sinking feeling that nothing was going to happen as Tessa touched her shoulder, looking puzzled.

Then, a small light appeared at the mark, growing larger in size. I gave a small cry and leaped back, Tessa staring down at her shoulder in awe. Then she screamed, her leg breaking at an odd angle as she fell to the floor, sobbing and crying, the leg readjusting itself. I knelt beside her, feeling horrible for her. In the back of my mind was how painful my shift had been and poor Tessa looked like she was in agony as yet another bone broke with a sickening crack.

"Ouch" screamed Tessa, her shoulder cracking and breaking.

"I'm sorry, I'm so sorry" I mumbled, feeling helpless. There was nothing I could do, but stay beside her and watch, too frightened to touch her as she shifted.

It felt like it was going on forever, all the bones making sickening sounds as they broke and readjusted themselves. Tessa's mouth was open in a constant scream. To my shock, however, no one came to find out the source of the noise, further proving my suspicions that the pack didn't give an actual shit about poor Tessa. She screamed, bucking and writhing on the ground, fur beginning to grow along her arms and legs. I hoped it wouldn't be too much longer, for Tessa looked like she was about to pass out any minute now, she had grown so pale.

She gave her loudest scream yet and I looked away, the sound piercing my ears, backing away slowly as a wolf appeared in her midst. My mouth fell open. She was beautiful. Utterly stunning. She was grey with white ears and a white patch on her stomach and white paws. She practically pranced in front of me, moving her paws around experimentally. Her ears pricked up and she stared at me hard.

Well done. Your friend Tessa is beautiful and now so is her wolf. Great work.

All I did was mark her.

But you have the ability to turn all undesirables. Not just shifters, but vampires, witches, you name it. You can bring it to the surface like you did your friend. That's what makes you unique. Just like shifters, the other races have people who failed to change. This also makes us coveted and you need to keep this a secret. Your friend Tessa is an exception but we're going to have to rely on our mate to keep us from harm.

Like hell! We can take care of ourselves. I don't want to tell him anything.

He's going to find out. Tessa didn't have a wolf before and now she does. IT kind of is going to be hard to keep that a secret.

Damn it. You're right.

I eyed Tessa who was preening in front of me. "Tessa," I said softly "it's time to change back now."

She cocked her head and whined, her paws scrabbling at the ground. I remembered this was her first time and she might not know how to change back, but wouldn't her wolf tell her?

I opened my mouth to tell her to picture herself as human, when she began to shrink and her bones began to make those sickening cracking noises as they shifted and broke, readjusting themselves, until a very naked and nude Tessa stood in front of me.

She flung herself into my arms. "That was brilliant" she exclaimed "I can't believe it Amber, I just can't" she shook her head in awe. "I have a wolf and it's all because of you," she said giggling.

I patted her awkwardly on the back, my cheeks aflame. She noticed me blushing and stepped back, her cheeks suddenly flushed.

"I should probably get changed" she squealed and rushed towards her bedroom.

I sighed, suddenly exhausted, and crept over to her couch, feeling drained now, my whole body feeling cold. I felt like I was sick or something and I lay down, feeling darkness take over me.

Chapter 65 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Darius POV

I was miserable, but then so was she. Ever since Sophie had spilled the beans on Amber's pregnancy it was like there was a shadow hanging over us. I had been incredulous at the news and then angry. Why had she taken so long to tell me? Why didn't Amber speak to me and let me know that she was pregnant with my child? I don't know what I would have done, but now my options are limited. For instance, did I go and find Amber and this Alpha Rowan and demand a paternity test? Could I really do that to Amber? But wasn't I entitled to see my child? To be a part of its life?

It had started a heated argument, one that lasted for days. Sophie had been inconsolable, terrified I would leave her considering that she was infertile. While I understood, partially, where she was coming from, it still hadn't been a good enough excuse for keeping me in the dark for so long. Then I discovered her parents had known but still insisted that I marry Sophie and it had been enough to push me over the edge. Without so much as a by your leave, I had gathered some of my things and moved into a guest room, unable to bear looking at Sophie's face for even a minute longer. Not when I was so livid.

My mother and father were confused, of course, for neither Sophie nor I would tell them what the argument was about and we'd been careful to shout in whispers so that we weren't overheard. It helped that most of the pack rooms were soundproofed, of course, but we'd still been cautious. These days, Sophie was wallowing in her misery, walking around with a very ashen face and practically stumbling along the corridors and hallways, completely silent, barely acknowledging anyone, not even my mother. Whereas I, on the other hand, had kept myself occupied and busy, doing numerous tasks and paperwork that involved either pack business, or my father's business. I kept late hours and came home late every night, long after Sophie was in bed so that I didn't have to worry about running into her.

Knock, knock. I paused in my writing, staring at the clock. It was late and I was currently in my parent's study, catching them up on paperwork. It was almost midnight and I wondered who was still up to see that I was awake. It was my mother, alone, clad in a robe and nightgown, a tired smile on her face.

"Can I come in?" she asked hoarsely, looking drained.

I sat back in the chair and made a gesture, inviting her to come inside. Not that she needed the invitation when it was, in fact, her and father's study to be fair.

My mother made herself comfortable in the armchair across from me, folding her ankles and resting her delicate, fragile-looking hands in her lap. She cleared her throat as I stared mutely, wondering what it was that she wanted to talk to me about.

Finally, she spoke. "It's about Sophie," she said delicately, as I stiffened and then scowled at her. What right did mother have to pry into my private affairs?

"What about Sophie?" I asked evenly, pretending to give a damn.

My mother could always see right through me. "Darius," she said sharply, "I don't know what it is that you and Sophie are arguing about, but I do know this. The both of you look completely miserable when you looked so happy coming back from your honeymoon. What on earth happened between the two of you?"

I looked away, clenching my jaw and not answering. It was none of my mother's business and she knew it too. If this was what she wanted to talk about, then she could just leave.

My mother's face softened for a moment. "Listen," she said softly, leaning forward and gazing directly into my eyes as I blinked at her. "I know that your father and I have been hard on you, that it wasn't easy having to marry Sophie. Perhaps we should have given you some more time, but we were in a hurry to get you situated and married. We're getting older" she explained, pausing, "and tired. Tired of running the pack and the business. We want to retire soon, get to enjoy our grandchildren, and spend time with our family. You were always going to take over the running of the pack, sooner or later, but now with your stubbornness with Sophie and your bickering, I don't know if you're mature enough to be the leader."

That stung. It wasn't my fault that Sophie and I were arguing. Besides,, who else was going to take over leadership of the pack? I was their only son. "I'm mature", I said gruffly, "you and father still argue, don't you?" I pointed out.

She grimaced. I had her there and she knew it.

"Yes, we still argue," she said softly, agreeing with me, "but in the end, we make up with each other and forgive each other for what we said or did. That's part of being in a relationship", she exhaled, "and it's not easy, but it's worth it in the end. Sometimes you have to be the bigger person", she explained, "even when you don't feel like being it."

I definitely didn't feel like being the bigger person, but what was I supposed to tell her? Oh hey mum, you know how badly you want grandchildren? Well, it turns out that Amber is pregnant with my baby and your grandchild. How do you feel about that? I couldn't say that. So I muttered "maybe, I'll think about it" in an effort to appease her.

"Do," she says quietly, "it's very lonely sleeping in a bed by yourself, don't you think?"

I didn't have to think about it. I missed Sophie and being in our bed more than I could say. There was something about the way she would sleep beside me, her arm reaching out to touch me, her legs thrown over mine. Her soft snores filled the room, as her gentle breathing and the warmth of her body. I missed her companionship and her witty humor. But I was so angry at her that it made everything else seem obsolete.

"Is she pregnant?" my mother asked sweetly and I shook my head, seeing her shoulders slump and her face droop.

"No mother, she's not pregnant," I said hastily and my mother sighed. I hated to see the disappointment on her face. Lord knows how she would take it when she eventually learns that Sophie couldn't have children.

"Well, give it time," she said wisely, standing up and wrapping her dressing gown more securely around her body, "and think about what I've said. No argument is worth being this miserable" she pointed out, coming around the desk and giving me a quick peck on the cheek. "I love you."

"I love you," I said back, my voice thick and hoarse. Damn it, mother was really getting to me tonight.

I watched her leave with a heavy heart.

I tried to get back to my writing but I just couldn't. My mother's words kept playing in my mind, repeating themselves over and over again. Was she right? Was I being too harsh on Sophie? I tried to see it from Sophie's point of view. I knew she had always loved me, even when we were small children, and that she had viewed Amber as a threat to her happiness. She must have been terrified when she discovered her sister was pregnant with my child. She would have been afraid of losing me completely. It made sense why she'd hidden the information from me, but it still hurt.

I swallowed hard and then sighed. The paperwork remained untouched as I slowly got up and turned the light off, shutting the study door resolutely behind me. I was tired. Tired of the fighting, tired of feeling sad and miserable, tired of being alone at night. I made my way back towards the guest room and was surprised, but not completely shocked, to see Sophie standing in the front of it, her arms folded across her chest, her blue eyes narrowed with resolution.

"We need to talk" she burst out, obviously expecting me to argue back or to be defiant.

Instead, I stunned her by nodding and opening the door, motioning her inside. She walked in hesitantly, glancing over her shoulder to make sure I followed her in.

"I know what I did was wrong, Darius, and I'm sorry" she whispered, her voice shaking, her body trembling, her face extremely pale "I just couldn't bear the thought of losing you. I should have told you about Amber when we first got together or when I found out. I was selfish and pigheaded and a complete bitch for doing what I did and I don't blame you for being angry" she vented.

I held up a hand to stop her in her tracks, her voice grinding to a complete halt. "Sophie," I said evenly and very calmly, "what you did was beyond what I thought you were capable of. Do you know how it feels to find out you're going to be a father and that you and your parents knew but said nothing? I know Amber said nothing, but you were marrying me, and Amber and I are now exes. I can see why she would want me to have nothing to do with it. But you, you should at the very least have confided in me once we were married instead of waiting so long."

"I know," she said meekly, " I was afraid."

"I know" I growled, "and I'm still mad at you, but I can see your way of looking at things and I can understand why you did it."

Her eyes widened in disbelief. "So will you forgive me?" she asked in a small voice.

I hesitated. Could I forgive her and move on from this? Both of us were completely miserable without the other, and my wolf was urging me to forgive, to once again form a bond and relationship with our chosen mate.

"I can forgive you," I said slowly, "so long as you never ever do something like this to me again. Is that understood?" I demanded my tone almost the alpha tone.

She immediately brightened. "I promise" she swore, her voice still shaking, "but Darius, what are you going to do? Are you going to ask for custody of the baby?"

I shook my head. "I don't want full custody, it wouldn't be fair to Amber, but I do want to play a part in my child's life. Can you live with that, Sophie? I know it won't be easy for you, but to me it's fair and if you can't, then just say the word and leave, right now. I won't stop you" I said firmly.

She smiled, though I could see tears forming in the corner of her eyes. "I can live with that, but Darius, you can't just ambush Amber," she said in dismay, "for starters, my father would be furious and I wasn't even supposed to tell you" she added dismayed.

Screw her father, I thought fiercely. As it was, I'd had to do some serious sweet talking to find out where Amber was at the moment with her mother.

"I won't ambush Amber and just turn up, that wouldn't be right" I mused, "but perhaps a letter to open up some contact would be best? She was always partial to letters", I added, and saw Sophie wince.

"I think that's a good idea", Sophie breathed, "and at some stage, we will go and see her. I'd like to see for myself how she's going and what she's up to. I don't believe a word of what my father told me. I still think she could use our help, but then again, she's the feisty brave one and I'm the . . ."

"Beautiful, sweet, gorgeous, one" I supplied with a small smile as she blushed and bit her lip.

"Not that beautiful" she whispered shyly.

I grabbed hold of her hand and drew her towards me, reveling in the sparks that flew between us and the tingles that ran down my spine. I leaned down and kissed her gently on the lips. "Let's get started on this letter," I said firmly, "and then let's go to bed, the two of us together."

With luck, I could get the letter sent, without my parents being none the wiser.

Chapter 66 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Sophie's POV

I've been experiencing the worst sort of cravings lately, like apple and peanut butter. You wouldn't think that was delicious but it was and something I was eating everyday. It was like I couldn't get enough of it lately and I was packing on the pounds like you wouldn't believe. I stared at myself in the mirror, hating on my reflection. I could see my stomach was getting larger and so were my thighs. The dress I wore was unceremoniously ripped off of me and sent to the floor with the other ones.

A knock sounded on the door and I turned, to see my mother standing there, a wide smile on her face, even as she surveyed the mess I had made. "Looks like you're having trouble deciding what to wear" she said politely, trying not to giggle.

I frowned at her, not in the mood for teasing or jokes. "Everything looks awful on me" I pouted, gesturing towards the small mountain of clothes on mine and Darius's bedroom floor. "Nothing is fitting right" I complained, trying not to sound bitter about it. Maybe I needed to start training more? But I was already attending four times a week without the pounds coming off. Perhaps I needed to up it up a bit.

"You do look like you've gained some weight" my mother said frankly and I winced at the harshness of her words. Did she have to be so blunt about it?

"Gee thanks mother" I said sarcastically, feeling really down about myself.

"That's not what I meant. Sophie, it's bound to happen when your in a relationship. If I didn't watch what I ate, unlike your father who possesses a high metabolism, I would be gaining a lot of weight too. Love makes you less inclined to watch your weight."

I guess she's right. I mean, since Darius and I talked and agreed to write that letter to Amber, which hopefully no one knows about, we've been much more intimate and loving towards each other in general. Still, though, it rankled not fitting into my old clothes. I spun around to tell my mother that and felt myself get dizzy all of a sudden, sitting down on the bed and fanning my face in shock.

"What happened?" exclaimed my mother, sitting beside me and also beginning to fan me. My cheeks felt flushed and I felt hot.

"Don't know" I muttered "I just got dizzy that's all."

My mother eyed me with narrowed eyes. "Are you pregnant?" she asked outright.

God, how that question hurt. It might have been said with the best intentions but it killed me inside every time someone so much as asked about pregnancy or when Darius and I were having children. It wasn't helping that technically Darius was going to be a father, hopefully with some involvement in his child's life, while I would never get the chance to be a mother. I winced and tried not to show my facial expression to my mother, who was looking at me with excitement. I hated to burst her bubble, but I needed to set her straight.

"No mother" I sighed, rolling my eyes "I'm not pregnant. There's no chance of it either" I added hastily when I saw her open her mouth.

She closed it, looking disappointed. As she turned to the side, I swore I could see bruises, cleverly disguised underneath her makeup. I gently reached over and touched her cheek, her eyes widening as she whipped her head back around to face me.

"What's this?" I asked gently, wondering how she had gotten the bruises.

We were both ignoring the fact that I was still technically in my underwear as I hadn't decided on which clothes to wear yet.

My mother flinched and then met my gaze head-on. "I decided to go back to training and well" she laughed nervously "as you can see I didn't do too well."

I was stunned, I hadn't anticipated mother wanting to go back to training and learning to fight. She'd always been so placid, so why the change of mind all of a sudden? It didn't make sense to me. "Training" I repeated, a bit suspicious "you?"

"Yes, I decided it was time to learn to defend myself," my mother told me firmly and I nodded, in full agreement of that. But it begged the question of why she had decided this, after years of never training and being involved in the business.

"Well good for you" I complimented her. "It's a good idea mother, I worry about you not being able to defend yourself if rogues attack" I added deadpan.

She smiled and nodded and then changed the subject. "I think you should wear the black dress, it suits your coloring and will hide the weight gain quite nicely," she said cheerfully.

I looked over at the dress she was pointing at and reluctantly grabbed it, shimmying into it and tossing my long blonde hair over my shoulder. I turned around and pointed at the zipper. "Can you help me do this up please?"

Mother quickly dragged the zipper up and I was finally dressed for the day. Darius was probably already doing work in the study. He was an early riser, going to training and then helping his parents to do paperwork or help out in the business.

"Oh, what made you come visit anyway?" I asked mother as we walked downstairs and into the kitchen. I began to grab a bowl and put some cereal in it while mother watched.

"Oh I was visiting Luna Marian and I wanted to see how you were going," my mother said quietly "your father sends his regards."

"Why didn't he just come with you?"

"He had a bit of a headache" mother said lamely. I wanted to ask whether it was a headache or a hangover. Given my father, I suspected it was the latter.

We sat down at the kitchen table, chatting away before Darius came walking in. He smiled and came over, to peck me on the forehead. My mother smiled at him approvingly.

"Clarissa," he said with a grin, going over to my mother and giving her a hug "it's lovely to see you again" he added, as my mother beamed at him.

"I was wanting to steal my ahem lovely wife-to-be away if that's alright with you?" he asked and my mother gave us both a nod, getting up from the table.

"I think it's time I went and checked on your father anyway," she said softly, bending down to give me a hug "see if he's up yet."

"Let us know if you need anything" Darius added as he hugged her "and it is lovely to see you. We must make a trip out to see you at some stage."

"That would be nice" my mother gushed "but I'm planning on visiting Amber sometime soon as well. See how the poor girl is getting along."

It was nice of my mother to worry about my twin sister, even though technically she had forced Amber into an arranged marriage along with my father. I watched her walk away, out the front door, before I turned to Darius, wondering what it was he wanted.

"What did you need me for?" I asked and watched his eyes turn shifty.

He motioned for me to follow him upstairs. I did so, watching him close and lock the door carefully behind him. Then, before I could move, he came towards me and pulled me in tight, holding me as though he never wanted to let go. It was a nice feeling.

He pulled back slightly and bent his head down, his eyes pitch black, staring into mine, before he took my lips with his own, plundering my mouth as I gave a low moan. His hands began to eagerly work the zipper. I fell onto the bed, and he began to tug my dress over my head, between kisses. His hand moved, undoing the clasp to my bra and letting it come over my shoulders and fall to the ground. Now I was lying there with nothing but my panties on.

"Darius" I gasped, his mouth capturing mine again. God, I was turned on, my juices beginning to flow as I got highly aroused. His hand crept towards my panties and before I could blink, he took them right off my legs.

"God, I want you" he hissed and I wanted him badly too. I could see his cock becoming erect. It was straining his jeans. I reached over and tentatively pulled his zipper down, freeing his member. My hands reached out to cup him and I was rewarded with a sharp inhalation from Darius.

"Christ" he moaned as my hand began to touch him "that feels so damn good" he urged me to continue.

I didn't need any urging, my mouth gently closing in around him, tasting him, the smoothness of his shaft velvety in my mouth. His hands twined themselves in my hair as I kept turning on my side, Darius gingerly thrusting slowly inside of my mouth as I opened it wider, granting him further access.

He tasted so good and I increased the pressure, bobbing my head back and forth, as Darius's thrusts met me. Soon all you could hear was his moans and groans. "Goddamn Sophie" he swore, as my eyes stared directly at him "if you don't stop that, then I'm going to cum" he growled.

I refused to stop and he grabbed my hair, pulling it so that I was forced to let go of his shaft, pulling back reluctantly as he winked at me. "I can't let you have all the fun" he laughed and turned me back on my back, lining himself at my entrance. But before he could enter me, I felt the dizziness return, mixed in with a high degree of nausea, that had me bolting upright and startling poor Darius.

"Geez. are you alright?" he asked as I bolted to the bathroom, reaching it just in time to vomit up my stomach contents into the toilet bowl.

"No," I said miserably, my stomach still churning "it must have been something I ate."

Darius looked apologetic now. "I'm so sorry Sophie, if I'd known you weren't feeling well. . ." he trailed off helplessly.

I wiped my mouth with the back of my hand and flushed the toilet, reaching over for my toothbrush, but something made me hesitate. My mother's words came back to me. "You're not pregnant are you?"

I couldn't be. It was impossible and yet, some small part of me, whispered what was the harm in taking a pregnancy test? Other than the hurt I would feel when it came back negative.

I had to know. I reached down into the bathroom vanity and began to rifle through the drawers, crossing my fingers that someone had placed one in there. Sure enough, at the very back of the vanity, there lay a pregnancy test, still in its wrapping. Darius's eyes widened as I began to tear it open. "Sophie" he began warningly "I don't think this is a very good idea, do you? I mean, you know that you can't get pregnant. Do you really want to put yourself through this?"

I shook my head at him. He made sense but I still wasn't going to be stopped.

I sat down on the toilet, holding the test underneath my urine stream, before placing the lid on the test and balancing it on the edge of the vanity. I sat there, holding my stomach, which thankfully had managed to calm down somewhat, and I no longer felt as sick as I was before. Darius sighed and looked away, no doubt feeling sorry for me. I counted down the minutes and the seconds, each moment taking a lifetime. Darius frowned and grabbed hold of the test as I held my breath, praying, hoping vehemently for what would be the impossible.

Darius looked at me with wide eyes, that turned pitch black. His voice was shaking when he spoke. "Sophie, there's two lines on here. Doesn't that make you pregnant?"

Just like that my world came crashing down around me.

Chapter 67 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Stacey's POV

I sighed, feeling bored and more than a little pissed off. I had spied on Rowan numerous times already and he had been to see that slut on several occasions, but for now, he was staying away. I had heard rumors that he had marked her without her consent and that she was pissed off at him. So was I. It was going to be harder to seduce him away from the girl, now that he'd marked her and it made my life a hell of a lot harder. What the fuck had he been thinking.

I began to wander away from the pack house, deciding that a walk was in order, wearing the special perfume Celia had gifted me, this time it was an aphrodisiac. I had an idea in my mind and I was certain it would work. Celia's spells were dead on and never seemed to fail me. Which reminded me, I needed to go and see her when I had the chance. I walked idly past pack members on the grounds, some who stared at me with incredulous looks, others with angry glares. I ignored them all. The aphrodisiac would hit its target soon, I just needed to get to the forest. I had someone in particular in mind for my target, someone I had seen numerous times and it was around this time that he began to make his rounds. All I had to do was get his attention.

I made it and began to make as much noise as possible, knowing that patrol was nearby. Sure enough, soon, a man approached me, his hair disheveled, his body all sweaty. Gross, but I couldn't afford to be picky. He was young, slightly younger than I was and he had nice blonde hair with sparkling blue eyes. He was cute and in another lifetime, I might have wanted to seduce him for the mere purpose of being his girlfriend. He wore blue jeans and a white shirt, his eyes black, ready to shift at a moment's notice. I saw him wrinkle his nose as my perfume drifted toward his nostrils and his eyes widen as the aphrodisiac hit him. I preened, aware that he was staring at me, my body clad in a little black dress. I wore no underwear, knowing what would happen next. Well, anticipated what was next at any rate.

He walked towards me slowly, dazed and a little bewildered, confused as he continued to stare at me.

"You shouldn't be out here" he commented, "it's dangerous and there are rogues out here."

I wasn't afraid. I'd heard the rogues had disappeared out of sight and that it was causing Rowan and his pack to grow concerned. If they were nearby they would still leave me alone. The perfume would confuse them. I smiled at the young man, making him blink.

"Oh no, really," I said dramatically "I didn't realize. How stupid of me." God, I sounded like a dumb bimbo and even I winced at my acting.

"That's alright, but we really should get you back to safety" he muttered, "what's your name?"

I smiled triumphantly, the dress showing off my cleavage. His eyes darted down toward it and I saw him lick his lips. "It's Stacey" I whispered.

"Stacey, what a beautiful name" he murmured, coming closer, almost stumbling towards me. "You smell so good" he growled, and I saw his wolf was close to the surface.

"Thank you" I breathed, reaching out and touching his arm, sparks flying between us. The young man shuddered.

"What's your name?" I cooed.

He swallowed hard. "It's Grant," he said thickly.

I leaned closer so that our lips were practically touching. He hesitated as I willed him to make the first move, the perfume potent, and strong smelling. His eyes almost rolled to the back of his head and then his lips were mashing against mine. He was rough, rather than gentle, not that I minded his arm snaking around my waist and holding me firmly against his body. He was muscled, and strong, and I reveled in his embrace, reminding myself of the mission.

"Open your mouth" he hissed and I did as he asked his tongue diving inside, touching mine and stroking it with his own. It felt slimy and I struggled not to gag, pretending to enjoy it. Sometimes you just have to make certain sacrifices.

I pulled away, stroking his face and smiling widely. "How about we do something for you" I purred.

He blinked, looking uncertain, drawing in a sharp breath as I began to undo the zipper on his jeans. I pulled them down, freeing his rather impressively large and thick member, which stood fully erect and

hard as a rock. I looked down at the dirt floor and sighed, getting on my knees as his hands touched my shoulders, keeping himself standing upright.

I eyed his member. Not only was he rather large but he was also extremely wide as well. I started to lick the tip and Grant moaned out loud, his fingers digging into my shoulders. I opened my mouth and slowly took him in as he began to writhe slightly.

"Fuck" he moaned out loud "Christ."

I grinned to myself, beginning to bob my head up and down, tasting how smooth and velvety his cock was, taking all of it inside my mouth and beginning to deep-throat him. I was rewarded with his moans and growls as I continued, one hand reaching up to cup his scrotum. I played with his balls while continuing to mouth him, his hips beginning to thrust back and forth in time to my own thrusts. "God" he gasped, his hands reaching to twine in my hair, keeping my head in place "fuck your good" he moaned.

I felt him stiffen and then he gave a low growl, his seed cumming inside my mouth. I swallowed, feeling it's stickiness going down, tasting it, ensuring all of it was swallowed before he let go of my head.

I was expecting that to be it. That he would be finished with me and I could get what I wanted, but his strong arms gripped my own and he helped me up, his eyes still glittering black. "You don't think I'm finished with you yet" he growled, and this time I was shocked into silence. He led me over to a tree and placed my hands above my head, my face against the trunk. His hands skimmed my body, sending the dress upwards, and exposing my naked behind to his gaze.

"You're a little slut" he said lowly and I shivered, feeling the breeze on my skin.

I said nothing, as he slapped me on the bottom twice, playfully, not hard like it would hurt. He leaned against my body and I felt his cock pushing into the back of my legs, hard and fully erect once more.

He lined himself up at my entrance and then thrust in once, hard, pushing his way all the way in as I gave a small cry. He was huge, bigger than I was used to and it took a moment for my body to adjust to him. He pulled lightly on the back of my hair, tugging, as he began to pound back and forth inside of me, his body slapping hard against mine.

"Oh my god," I moaned, enjoying the sensation.

Every thrust hit a spot inside of me, causing me to cry out and shout, into the otherwise silent woods.

He was merciless, pulling all the way out and then pushing all the way back in. My toes curled in pleasure as the intensity of his thrusts increased. I was pushing back at the same time as his thrusts, eager, keen, wanting him. Every nerve ending was on fire. His cock was making me want more, my thrusts becoming just as hard as his.

He took me in a primal, possessive way, murmuring dirty little things into my ears. "Take it all, you little slut."

I actually found myself liking it.

"Take my cock, you whore."

I closed my eyes, my hands keeping my face from hitting the trunk as our bodies, slick with sweat, continued to smack against each other. The pleasure was rising, becoming intolerable and I cried out, stiffening, as my orgasm washed over me. He smacked me on the bottom as I screamed, still continuing to take me, my orgasm being prolonged as he fucked me.

His hands gripped my waist tightly. I could hear his heavy pants. His own little gasps of pleasure. My orgasm began to fade and I clutched the trunk of the tree, unable to move, as the pleasure began to rise again inside of me.

He fucked me even harder and I gave a sharp cry. He was incredible, so big and so huge, every thrust hitting my g-spot. I wasn't sure just how much more I could take. Then he pulled out to my incredible disappointment, whirling me around to face him.

"Get on your hands and knees" he sneered and I hurried to obey.

I wanted to feel his thick hard cock back inside of me. He moved around to the back of me and I felt him reline himself at my entrance. My nails dug into the dirt as he gave a hard thrust, his hands gripping me

around my waist, my behind slamming into his cock. I moaned, almost delirious with pleasure, my hips moving back and forth in time to his thrusts.

We ignored the birds taking flight around us. Nothing else existed except the two of us and what we were currently doing. I had thought this would be a quick thing and I could be back with no one the wiser, but it looks like my plans have slightly gone awry. Grant slapped my behind, once, twice, thrice and my bottom began to feel like it was burning. IT only added to the pleasure.

"Oh god" I cried, my nails scrabbling at the ground.

He thrust harder, his own body beginning to stiffen and I could tell he was close, but so was I. I could feel my body pulsating and then I gave a giant shriek as my orgasm washed over me. He gave a loud shout and then I felt his cum inside of me, spilling his seed, his body stilling. I panted, still in pleasure as he slowly withdrew from me, looking dazed.

"Fuck" he told me, collapsing onto the ground and awkwardly doing his jeans back up "that was amazing."

Amazing was an understatement. Celia was going to have some explaining to do when I brought this up.

"You were great," I told him sincerely, pulling my own dress back down and wincing as I felt his seed on my thighs.

He settled himself on the dirt floor, lying down. His blue eyes twinkled as he stared up at me. "I can't believe how good that was. When can we do it again?" he asked keenly.

I laughed. This was what I had been hoping for. "Well," I said coyly "I'm more than happy to do this again, but I require a certain favor if you please, in order to come back here."

He stared at me silently. But there was desperation in his gaze and I knew he would want more of what we had just done. The perfume had more than done its job.

"What kind of favor were you thinking?" he asked slowly, a smile appearing on his face. I knew I needed to be quick, after all, he probably needed to be somewhere shortly patrolling.

"I need you to help me find something, a special kind of herb," I told him and he nodded his head. "It should grow somewhere in this forest. All I need you to do is track it down."

"What's it called?" he asked.

"Pennyroyal. It's very distinctive looking. Here's a picture of it." I retrieved my cell phone and showed him, watching as his eyes narrowed and he took it all in.

"What's it used for?"

"Oh, it's good for a variety of things. I just want to try using it in a skincare cream" I lied and he nodded again.

"Consider it done," he said gruffly "on one condition. You come and retrieve it the day after tomorrow and we have some more fun," he said suggestively.

I got up and adjusted my clothing. "Done."

The stupid fool had no idea what he had just agreed to and wouldn't do until it was too late to do anything.

Chapter 68 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

Rowan's still avoiding me, but I've had enough. I stomp downstairs and glare at him, still seething over his having marked me. To his credit, he took one look at me and then looked away, almost as though he was ashamed. "Are you ever going to have the decency to come and talk to me" I snarled, thoroughly fed up and tired of everything. For a mate, he sure as hell sucked as one.

Rowan sighed. He glanced at me guiltily. "Look" he began "I'm so sorry for marking you like that, it was my wolf Daemon, he just took over and did it before I could stop him."

"Stop making excuses" I snapped, "you were angry at me because of the pregnancy, admit it."

He ran a hand through his already slightly disheveled hair and had the decency to at least look me in the eyes this time. "I was angry, yes," he said slowly "because you failed to mention it to me and so did your parents. Can you blame me?" he asked quietly "it was a bit of a shock, especially considering we're mates. Daemon was crazy thinking about you carrying someone else's pup."

Screw Daemon, I thought to myself viciously. He had no right to do what he did, jealousy or otherwise.

I put my hand on my hips and glowered at him. "What about the marriage?" I asked lowly "the one you paid my parents for? What's happening with that?"

He paused and glanced out the window. I followed his eyes, frowning as I took in Stacey wandering past the window, the breeze flowing through her hair, her dress billowing in the wind. If he still had feelings for Stacey he could at least admit it to me! So much for this so-called sacred mate bond.

"Look," he said, gesturing me to sit, which I did, albeit a bit sulkily "things are complicated right now. I admit that. I don't know what I want to do, especially since my ex-girlfriend may be carrying my biological child. I'm in a tough spot right now, between a rock and a hard place you might say."

How nice of him to explain it to me like I was a child incapable of grasping the concept.

"Do you still have feelings for her?" I asked, wanting to know the answer.

"I didn't think so, but lately I've been thinking about her and what we used to have," he said bluntly.

Ouch, that stung. I wish I could fling Darius in his face, but it was a little hard to do that when Darius had married Sophie. I wish I had an ex-boyfriend to brag about, one that wasn't married. Damn it.

"Well at least you are honest" I countered back, folding my arms across my chest "but what exactly do you expect me to do in the meantime?"

He frowns, looking bewildered. "What do you mean?" he asked, completely oblivious.

God, I wanted to roll my eyes or scream at him. Was he really that obtuse? Did he really think I would be content to just stay here in the pack and wait for him to make a decision? Maybe it was a male thing, but he was really coming across as an idiot.

"I mean," I said stiffly "do you expect me to just wait around forever? Especially" I hesitated and put a hand across my stomach "considering I have a child on the way, that I have to consider."

His mouth opened and closed, and His whole demeanor changed to a much angrier one. "Well, you can't leave" he shot out like I had forgotten "and I guess I'm asking exactly that of you" he finished rather lamely.

"Rowan, let's be real. I'm not going to wait until I've given birth for you to decide whether you want me or not. What about what I want?" I asked him "that should be taken into consideration too, don't you think?"

There was a knock on the study door and Rowan merely raised his eyebrows at me, before giving a loud shout "come in," clearly grateful for the interruption, while I sat there seething, my anger continuing to rise. Beta Laurence came into the room, an omega behind him, a tray of cups of tea sitting on a tray, which she placed politely on the huge study desk, before quickly withdrawing.

"I thought we could all use a nice cup of tea and then maybe we can all talk rationally, like adults," Laurence said hastily, plinking himself down on the armchair beside me and crossing his ankles. "You can hear the both of you going at it in the hallway, just so you're aware" he finished firmly.

I scowled at the man. I was surprised to see that Stacey wasn't joining us. Surely she was just as pissed off as I was about being in limbo, although I couldn't help remembering, Rowan hadn't seen fit to use his alpha tone on her.

"Where's Stacey?" asked Rowan.

"She's under guard outside, don't stress. She's not going anywhere we don't know about" Laurence said with some satisfaction, before gesturing to the tea.

I reluctantly took one, glancing down at it. It was a herbal tea, that smelled like peppermint and a hint of something else, that I couldn't quite put my mind to.

It did smell delicious and my mouth watered as I slowly took a sip.

Rowan grabbed a cup of tea, as did Laurence, both of them slowly sipping away and eyeing me warily as though I was about to attack them or shift. I was a bit insulted. Lilac and I were both in control now and wouldn't shift unless we absolutely had to, wanting to conserve our energy for our growing pup. Not that they needed to know that. It would serve them right if they were a little afraid of me.

"So have you learned anything from your wolf?" asked Laurence with interest, leaning closer to ask me as I sipped at my herbal tea. It tasted remarkably sweet for tea.

"Yes" I said proudly and then glanced between the two of them, unable to prevent myself from bragging just a little. "I can turn undesirables into full fledged shifters, vampires, witches, you name it. I turned Tessa" I added, remembering my friend who had been ecstatic to finally have a wolf.

"Awesome" Laurence said with genuineness. He glanced at Rowan who looked equally impressed "I've been trying to research white wolves but haven't been able to come across much. To have that much power" he shook his head and then realization dawned "you turned Tessa into a full fledged shifter?"

"I brought her wolf to the surface" I corrected him, "technically she was still a full fledged shifter, I should have worded it differently."

"Wow" breathed Laurence.

I finished my drink and sighed, leaning backwards. I was too tired to argue with Rowan anymore, no matter how much the man provoked me into fighting with him. Part of me could understand where he

was coming from and feel compassionate about it, but another part of me was selfish and wanting to debate the fact that mates should stay together. Besides, I needed to think about what was best for my baby.

"What else can you do?" asked Laurence, his eyes sparkling. He waited with anticipation for me to speak and I hated to disappoint him.

"I'm afraid that's all I know of."

We can do other things as well, but I can't risk our enemies knowing what powers we possess. I cannot risk you telling anyone.

Then why not at least tell me? Are you afraid that I'll accidentally let it slip Lilac?

That's exactly what I'm afraid of. It wouldn't be intentional, but an accident and your enemies could find out. It's better to be safe than sorry.

But I want to know what we're capable of.

You will in time.

I frowned and cut off Lilac, a little annoyed. My own wolf didn't trust me for heaven's sakes! What did a girl have to do to get some trust around here? Part of me was chagrined and another part of me whispered that Lilac was right. But what did she mean by our enemies? I didn't have any enemies, not unless you counted Luna Marian and she had been a bitch to me for years. She was hardly a threat now that I had left her pack behind. I suppose you could count my father, but I hadn't heard from him since I'd come to Rowan's pack either, and it was hardly likely that he was going to find out that I finally had a wolf, or that it was a rare or unique one.

I placed the now empty cup of tea onto the tray and grimaced, leaning back in the chair and feeling uncomfortable. Beads of sweat began to run down my forehead, even though it was quite a cold and chilly day. My hands began to feel clammy and my breathing became heavy. Not only that, but there was now massive cramping in my stomach, which was causing me to become rather panicked.

"Something's wrong" I managed to wheeze out, but Rowan was already jumping to his feet and helping me to stand, making Laurence move the chair out of the way. I fell and he gathered me up in his arms. I smelt blood and instantly I knew. I was bleeding. Panic went into overdrive. Laurence looked helpless, but Rowan moved, faster than I believed he could, running with me in his arms and yelling for people to get out of his way as my arms clung weakly around his neck. He gripped me tight, trying to prevent jostling me too much as I leant over to the side and puked, all of the contents of my stomach coming up. I felt lightheaded and my head slumped back against his chest as he raced towards the building in the distance, the hospital.

He slammed through the entrance and a woman dr came rushing up. By this time it felt like I was spinning, and I closed my eyes, leaning against Rowan for support as his arms cradled me protectively.

"What's happened?" asked the woman, motioning for us to follow her into an empty room.

"I don't know" Rowan said abruptly "she suddenly started to sweat and she almost collapsed back in the room. She's experiencing cramping and" he paused, his expression grim "she's bleeding as well."

"Oh dear" the woman said urgently "put her on the bed, while I grab an ultrasound machine. What's her name?"

I couldn't speak, I was too busy trying to breath.

"Her name is Amber."

"Alright, Amber, I need you to lie still okay. I'm taking your pants and underwear off so that I can perform the ultrasound and determine how much you are bleeding."

I just laid there shaking. I was terrified for my child. Then Lilac began to speak to me, sounding resigned.

We're going to have to use up all our energy to heal you. You ingested a poison and if we don't then you're going to miscarry our pup.

We can heal?

Yes. But you need to gather what strength you have left to do this Amber or our pup is going to die. Can you do that?

Just tell me what to do. I'm not letting our child die Lilac.

Right, picture yourself and the poison running through your veins. It will be black, like a shadow inside your body. Picture a white light forming from the palm of your hand and then guide it to your stomach. Picture the poison fading away. You can do this Amber, I have faith in you.

God help me, Lilac don't let me fail.

I won't. You will have my strength as well.

I began to picture a white light forming at the palm of my hand as the doctor performed her ultrasound. In my mind's eye I could see blackness in my veins. I felt heat at the palm of my hand and looked, gasping out loud as I saw a white light in the shape of a sphere in my hand. Rowan was gaping and the doctor was staring at me in stunned silence. I ignored them both and brought the palm of my hand towards my stomach, where the light stayed floating.

Now push it down so it goes inside of you.

I pushed it down, seeing in my mind's eye, the blackness slowly fading away as the light disappeared into my stomach. Instantly I felt better, the sweating stopping and my breathing becoming a lot easier. My body stopped shaking and the cramping disappeared. But I also felt exhausted all of a sudden, my eyes beginning to flutter closed. I must have used up all of my strength. The last thing I heard was the doctor speaking to Rowan in a hushed voice, full of awe.

"I don't know what's happening but she just managed to prevent her miscarriage. The bleeding is gone, look! The baby's heartbeat is fine and it's doing well. It's like she just healed herself."

Then darkness overtook me and I knew no more.

Chapter 69 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Rowan POV

I stared in shock at Amber, who was now passed out peacefully on the hospital bed, her chest moving up and down in rhythm to her soft snores. She had glowed like frigging glowed from her palm, and then somehow magically healed herself. I'd never heard of anything like it. It was a miracle and the doctor was quite concerned, finishing up the ultrasound.

"It's a miracle" the doctor informed me, "she was starting to miscarry but it's stopped now, as has the bleeding."

"Is the baby alright?" I demanded, feeling possessive of my mate and protective as well. My wolf Daemon was angry, urging me to guard our mate, who had almost lost the child she had carried.

Would have lost the child if she'd been unable to heal herself.

"The baby is fine, healthy as a horse. Their heart is beating at a normal pace and everything is going along nicely. We'll keep her monitored for now, to ensure nothing happens to the baby, but I would say the scare has passed now. What do you think she ingested to cause a miscarriage?"

It had to be the damn tea. It was the only thing I could think of. I summoned Laurence, who came quickly, still stunned at how rapidly Amber had gotten ill.

"Who made the tea?" I demanded hotly.

"I think the omega did" Laurence answered nervously.

"Find her and bring her to me" I ordered, my eyes on my mate. "She has a lot to answer for."

The doctor excused herself and left me alone, to sit by Amber's side and just watch her.

She looked so peaceful, so serene, lying there and sleeping. It was the most peaceful I had seen her in days and I wanted to make sure she wasn't disturbed, the doctors and nurses creeping in quietly to allow her to sleep. Part of the reason was that I wasn't sure how angry she would be if she woke up and saw me there. I had no right, considering everything I had done to her. But my wolf was frightened for her. After all, someone had purposely targeted her if she had ingested poison. But as far as I knew, Amber had no enemies, at least none that I knew of. Except for Stacey, who so happened to come waltzing into the door.

"Stacey" I hissed,, what are you doing here?"

Her face fell and she bit her lip, looking at me nervously. "I thought I would come and see Amber" she whispered, gesturing to the girl on the bed, looking quite concerned "I heard about what happened. Is she alright?"

I frowned, wondering whether Stacey was being genuine or not. I mind-linked Laurence.

Laurence, where was Stacey when this was all happening?

I've already checked and confirmed that. She was outside the entire time, with one of our most trusted guards. He's alibied her, I'm afraid, so it's not her if that's what you're thinking.

Who else could it possibly be?

I don't know. I'm sending the omega to you, she'll be there in a few minutes, but she swears up and down it wasn't her and I'm inclined to believe her.

Thanks, Laurence, keep investigating for me.

"Amber is going to be fine," I told Stacey shortly. "the doctors managed to catch what was wrong. There's nothing to worry about."

She gave a relieved sigh, putting her hand on her chest. "Thank goodness for that" she gasped, "and the baby? Is the baby going to be alright?" she asked.

I nodded and watched as her face lit up. She looked genuinely pleased to hear that, I thought to myself absently. She was clutching flowers which she placed on the little table next to Amber and sat down opposite me. She fidgeted with her hands and then gazed up at me, as I looked over toward Amber with a small smile on my face.

"Rowan," Stacey said tentatively, "have you come to a decision yet? About what you want to do?"

I shook my head. "No and now's hardly the time to discuss it, yet Stacey and Amber could have died today."

"I know" she burst out frustratedly, "and did it occur to you that maybe she's being targeted because she's your mate? People think she's going to be Luna. You've put her in danger, do you realize that? She's not cut out to be in the spotlight like this. She deserves better than that."

I stared at Stacey, hearing the passion in her voice, smelling the perfume that she liked to wear that reminded me of roses and honeysuckle. I inhaled deeply, feeling like I was in a trance as she moved closer to me, putting her hand on my arm.

"Look," Stacey said softly and honestly, "I made a mistake sleeping with Gordon and god help me, I've been punished for my transgression. Are you going to punish me forever for that? I'm going to be the mother of our child, Rowan. Don't you think you could cut me some slack?"

I couldn't answer, all I could do was stare at her helplessly. What was going on with me? Why was my heart beginning to thud wildly in my chest each time Stacey touched me or said my name?

She blinked her big green eyes at me. "Rowan, I've apologized continually for my actions. It's time we discussed the future and what it holds for both of us."

"Stacey, I don't know what the future holds" I managed to utter, glancing once more over at a still-sleeping Amber, "but I'll do right by the child, that I do swear to you. They will remain the heir and become Alpha of the pack if they are mine."

She smiled and lightly trailed her finger up my arm. "But you're going to need a wife," she said slowly, "one that knows how to act and to rule as Luna. Someone who is organized and able to make you stronger as an individual while helping to make the pack stronger."

She got up and leaned over me, showing off her cleavage. Involuntarily, my eyes darted to it, as her perfume wafted up my nostrils. She reached forward and smoothed my hair back from my face as I closed my eyes. She licked her lips and bent down further, beginning to press her mouth against mine, when we were suddenly interrupted by a tentative knock on the hospital room door. The auburn-haired omega who had served the tea stood there, fairly quaking in her boots, her body trembling, her eyes red and puffy from crying.

From the looks of it, Laurence had already put the poor girl through the wringer. Stacey reluctantly pulled back from me and glared at the omega.

"What do you want?" she spat out.

I held up a hand and glared at Stacey. "She's here to answer a few questions. Stacey, I need you to leave so that I can have some privacy please."

Stacey did not look pleased, her mouth opening and shutting for a few moments. I was a little surprised at her lack of arguing though when she shrugged her shoulders. "Alright, then I'll leave, but Rowan think about what I said. You will need a wife and I want to be that person" she added, before straightening herself and stomping through the door and past the startled omega.

The omega was young, a teenager, and I motioned her in, asking her to sit down. She did so but looked at me apprehensively.

"What's your name?" I asked her.

"Deidre" she whispered, her voice shaking.

"Well, Deidre, I need to know what you put in the tea."

She nodded and sat up straight, looking resolved. "I swear, all I put in it was peppermint, nothing more. I had heard rumors that your mate was pregnant and thought it would help. I have no idea how anything else got put in there."

"Did you have eyes on it at all times?"

She frowned thinking about it. "I made the tea up," she said slowly, "but I turned my back for a minute when I thought someone called my name. Turns out no one did, but that's the only time I didn't have eyes on it. I never, ever, once considered somebody would have poisoned it", she's sobbing now.

I sigh. Anybody could have poisoned the tea while she had her back turned. There was no way to tell for sure, even if I had a list of those present in the kitchen.

"It's not your fault," I said lowly, "you were trying to do something nice and it's appreciated. Please stop stressing. But if there's anything else you can think of, no matter how small it might be, please come and get me. I don't care what time of day or night it is, if it might be a clue, I want you to tell me. Do you hear me?"

She nodded. Her face was streaked with tears. I hastily handed her the tissue box. She grabbed a tissue and blew her nose, before wiping the tears trailing down her cheeks.

"Alpha Rowan, I really am very sorry," she said shyly.

I merely grunted and motioned for her to leave. She got the hint and stood up, baring her neck in submission and then turning and walking away, looking much happier to be leaving rather than staying.

"We both know that it was Stacey" came a gravelly hoarse voice and my eyes shot over to where Amber was, to see that she was struggling to sit up. I rushed over to help but she batted my hands away.

"Stacey was under guard the whole time," I told her apologetically.

"I don't care" she was stubborn. "I know it was her."

I sighed. Of course, Amber would blame Stacey. After all the two of them were constantly at each other, why would she think differently?

"How are you feeling?"

"Like crap," she said honestly, glowering at me, "but I guess that's what happens when you accidentally drink poison."

Ouch. I deserved that. "We're opening an investigation and we will get to the bottom of what happened", I promised her, as a doctor and nurse came in.

"You're awake" the doctor breathed, looking relieved and beginning to dust off her stethoscope.

"Yep," Amber said drily, her hair disheveled and her body coated in sweat. "I feel terrible" she added.

The doctor grimaced at that and began to check Amber's vitals as I stood there and watched, my arms folded.

"The baby," Amber said suddenly, sounding panicked, "is my baby alright?"

"Your baby is fine" the doctor reassured her. "I can show you if you would like", she added.

"Please" pleaded Amber, "I would like to see for myself."

The doctor wheeled the ultrasound machine over. "Alright, lie back down and pull your gown up for me please."

I looked away as Amber pulled up the gown that a nurse had placed her in earlier, exposing her stomach.

"The gel will be cold" warned the doctor, before she placed the probe on Amber's stomach, moving it around slightly as Amber winced.

I watched the monitor with interest, seeing a black-and-white image of a small baby on the screen. Amber took one look at it and began to cry, tears of relief.

"There's your baby," the doctor said quietly, "and if you listen you can hear its heartbeat."

Amber and I both listened to the steady thump of the baby's heartbeat. "It's too soon to tell the gender," the doctor said, taking the probe off, "but your baby is developing nicely and nothing is wrong with it. Whatever you did earlier, worked and caused a miracle."

Amber nodded, her eyes still shining with tears, a protective hand over her stomach.

"Thank you" she breathed and the doctor smiled, putting the machine away and coming back over. She took hold of Amber's hand.

"Your pulse is steady, which is a good sign" she murmured, as the nurse scribbled away on the clipboard, "and your vitals are good. I'd like you to stay overnight in order to monitor you and ensure that the baby stays fine. Is that okay with you?"

"That's fine," Amber told her hastily and the doctor grinned, letting go of her hand and nodding to the nurse, "let us get you something to eat and then you can go back to sleep if you'd like. You do still look a bit tired," she told Amber kindly.

Amber watched the two of them leave and then turned to me, her eyes blazing.

"Leave," she told me heatedly, her voice hushed, "now. I don't want you here, Rowan. I was poisoned in your study, by one of your enemies, and you won't believe me when I tell you it's Stacey."

"Amber" I began to protest, but her eyes turned black with hatred and I recoiled from the look on her face, stepping backward and feeling hurt for some indescribable reason.

"Fine, but if you need me, all you have to do is get someone to fetch me," I told her softly.

She just glared.

It was with a heavy heart that I left the room. No matter how much she insisted it was Stacey, I knew that Amber was wrong. Why couldn't she listen to me? After all, Stacey had been under guard the entire time, so how was it possible for her to manage to poison Amber?

Chapter 70 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Stacey POV

Fuck. I can't believe that, once again, my plans have been foiled by that little bitch. I thought for sure, once she'd ingested the Penny Royal Herb, that she would have a miscarriage and then want to leave the pack in the midst of her grief. Not to mention, Rowan would no longer feel obligated to keep her around. But I had failed. I scowled darkly, staring off into the distance.

"Hey," Grant said softly, from where he was standing and beginning to put clothes on "what's wrong?"

I could hardly tell him that I'd used him in order to poison my rival now, could I?

Instead, I bent down and grabbed my dress, strewn across the forest floor, along with my panties, stockings, and shoes. I'd dragged him out here, for what I liked to think of as stress relief. Well, he'd eased my stress alright, but not much.

"Nothing's wrong," I told him, lying for all I was worth. "I'm just worried about poor Amber" I added, looking all dramatic and upset.

Grant believed we were friends, the foolish boy. As if. I hated that little slut with a passion.

"I heard that she's going to be fine. I wonder who poisoned her though. My money's on someone trying to get at the alpha", Grant said, frowning, a look of concentration on his face. I admired his spirit but sighed at his dumbness.

Bless him, he still hadn't connected the dots. He wasn't very bright, but for all that, he was handsome.

"Yes, I visited her in the hospital and she's going to be alright. Somehow, the doctors got to her in time", I added with a frown. I had put in such a high dosage of the stuff as well. It should have happened in minutes, far too late for the doctors to be able to save her. Where had I gone wrong?

"I need to go and see someone," I told Grant quietly. "can you cover for me?"

He hesitates, but I'm wearing the other perfume, the one that's like an aphrodisiac and he can't get enough of me. I glanced meaningfully at him.

"Technically you're not supposed to leave the pack grounds," Grant said reluctantly.

I gave a big sigh and stood closer to him, letting the perfume take effect. "I'll make it worth your while" I cooed.

He blinked, his nostrils flaring as the perfume hit, his eyes going dazed and slightly confused, a bewildered look on his face. I silently celebrate the fact that it's working.

"Okay, but it better be worth my while" he growled, and I nodded, giving him a small hug, before stepping back. I place my dress, shoes, and everything else in a neat pile. They would only be ripped if I put them on now and then shifted. He watches me silently the whole time.

I shift, into my wolf, reveling in my taste of freedom. I went over to the small pile and fetched a hairbrush from it. It was not mine but Rowan's, and I was borrowing it. I needed to know something and Celia was going to give me the answer. I took off, my paws thudding heavily on the dirty forest floor, taking flight, the wind in my fur. It was a glorious day, with the sun shining, a clear blue sky, and birds chirping from their nests. Any other time, I would have been tempted to take my time, but I knew that Grant could only cover my having left for so long before someone became suspicious.

I made it to our little hideaway just in time, shifting outside the door and pounding on the door, completely naked.

"Celia" I hissed, aware of my nudity, "Celia"

She opened the door and ushered me inside. "I was working on a spell" she whined, "and you interrupted me."

I rolled my eyes. She had plenty of time to get back to her spells, but right now I was in a hurry. I brandished the hairbrush I'd carried in my mouth the whole trip at her.

"I have his hair" I blurted out and Celia sighed, all dramatic, like, and took hold of it, motioning me upstairs to the kitchen.

I sat at the dining table, oblivious to my nakedness as Celia placed a hair from the hairbrush into a small cauldron before she grabbed a pair of scissors from the drawer and made her way resolutely towards me. I flinched, but all she did was cut off a few hairs from the bottom of my hair.

"Sorry," she muttered, "but I need yours for comparison."

I didn't mind. She hadn't taken very many and it was hardly noticeable. She placed my hair in the cauldron.

"How did the herb go that I told you about?" Celia asked. "Did it do what it was intended?"

She paused at her work and stared at me.

I fidgeted in the chair. I was still angry and annoyed at myself for stuffing up so badly. I mean, it was a simple task. I hadn't even been spotted in the kitchen while the omega was making up the tea. That's how careful I was. It hadn't affected the males at all, so I'd dosed all three cups of tea while the omega had her back turned. Then I'd floated out the door and back to Grant, who was none the wiser about what I had just done.

"Somehow the doctors managed to stop the miscarriage" I snarled. "She's recovering in the hospital and the baby is apparently fine."

Celia looked stunned. I wondered what she was thinking.

"That's not possible," she said quietly, "did you give her the dosage amount I instructed you to give?"

"Yes" I snapped, "and it still didn't work. You must have gotten it wrong" I added, folding my arms over my chest and glowering at her.

Celia shook her head. "I don't have it wrong. That dosage was almost fatal when ingested. The only way she could have possibly been saved from having a miscarriage would have been magic or a spell of some kind and you told me there were no witches in the pack."

I frowned. There weren't any witches in the pack, I'd made certain of that. So whose magic had saved Amber? It didn't make sense. I was going to have to pry to get answers or do some serious spying when I got back.

Celia grimaced and then turned back to her work, placing various herbs into the cauldron and mashing them up, muttering under her breath the whole time. She tipped the contents out onto the benchtop and began to wave her hands over the hair, saying several words that I couldn't repeat or even pronounce correctly. The contents began to glow, a bright blue color, smoke rising up over the top. I gaped, in awe, fascinated despite myself. Celia didn't even spare me a glance as she continued to chant. Then I saw the hair. One lot was blue but the other lot was glowing green. What did that mean? Celia saw it as well and sighed. She stopped chanting and slowly the smoke dissipated and the glowing stopped, the contents returning to completely normal.

"Well," I demanded as Celia looked at me tiredly. "IS it Rowan's baby that I'm having or not?"

God, please let it be his baby.

Celia shook her head slowly. "No, the baby is the other man that you slept with. Gordon's. The different colors mean it wasn't a match for Rowan's DNA. You're definitely not carrying Rowan's child, I'm afraid", she said with a sigh.

My shoulders slumped. I'd been laying bets it was Rowan's this whole time and now I was finding out it was Gordon's baby. Now, what was I going to do?

"You could still pretend it's his baby" Celia suggested.

I glared. "He's going to demand a paternity test when the baby is born and then what will I do when he finds out? He'll most likely kill me for my deceit."

"What about a miscarriage?" suggested Celia, "before the baby comes to term. Then he won't have the heart to ask for a paternity test and if we have to we could falsify the documents."

I stared at her incredulously. Like hell, I was going to kill my baby. But another part of me was desperate to be Luna, no matter what it took. But in the end, I decided that I couldn't go through something like that. Not intentionally anyway.

"No," I said glumly, "I'm not having a miscarriage."

"Well then, we're going to have to work on making you Luna so that he forgets all about it. I can maybe develop a spell that makes him forget he even wants one, but it will take time. Something you may not have a lot of" Celia said wisely.

She was so right. I was running out of time and it was all that damn Amber's fault. He was so preoccupied with that little whore, it wasn't funny.

"Come up with the spell" I advised Celia, my eyes glinting. "I'll keep working on becoming Luna. I might need more of that special perfume as well", I told her "I've been wearing it every day to confuse him and it seems to be working, but that damn mate bond draws him back to her."

"I know, but there's no spell in existence that will sever a mate bond," Celia said sadly, "unless he rejects her, of course. Maybe that's an option you could explore."

I glanced at the time. It was getting late and I'd spent far more time than I'd planned to. I got up from the dining table and gave Celia a hug. She hugged me back.

"I miss you," she said a little sadly and sounding a little lost. I guess it could get lonely for a teenage witch, being all by herself. If I was honest with myself, I missed her a lot as well.

"I miss you too," I said with a small smile, before going towards the front door, Celia on my heels.

"I'll get that perfume to you next week" she informed me "I need to brew it up again first."

"That's fine, I still have some left. I'll see you again next week for it" I said and then flew out the front door, shifting and beginning to run.

I hoped Grant hadn't had any issues covering my absence. I had gotten the answers I sought and boy did that suck. I had really wanted it to be Rowan's baby too. More than Gordon's. Gordon had been easily manipulated and weak, nothing more than a loser I had used to get back at Rowan for being so cold and distant. Now I was stuck having his child. Great. Just what I needed. My paws flew along the forest tracks, dodging debris and jumping over fallen branches and sometimes fallen trees, before I skidded to a complete stop, right in front of an impatient-looking Grant.

"About time" he hissed, looking around nervously "the Alpha is wanting to speak with you. I told him I would bring you in. So hurry up and shift" he declared.

As Grant watched appreciatively, I shifted back to human form, stretching and working out the kinks. He cleared his throat and looked off into the distance as I bent down and retrieved my underwear, shimmying into it, before putting my dress on. I sat down on a relatively clean patch of grass and began to put my stockings back on, relieved to see there were no holes in them. My shoes went on last and I teetered on the heels, catching hold of Grant's arm as he quickly grabbed hold of me, steadying me on my feet. For a moment I felt dizzy and lightheaded, something I was unaccustomed to feeling. I suspected it was due to my pregnancy.

"Are you alright?" asked Grant in concern, his grip strong and sure.

I gave a slight nod, feeling queasy and a little apprehensive. I wondered what it was that Alpha Rowan wanted to talk to me about, and I was worried about what he was going to say. I crossed my fingers hoping it was nothing to do with a paternity test, as I walked on the grounds toward the pack house, Grant steering me in that direction and keeping me upright. Whatever this was, it had better be important. Maybe, I mused, I could even get some answers about Amber's condition and how she managed to keep from having the miscarriage I had set her up for. If I could get close enough to Rowan with my perfume, he might just spill Amber's secrets.