

## Chapter Two

Angry. I was so f\*\*\*\*\*g angry. But I've spent the past twenty-three years of my life knowing that it didn't matter. My dreams, my emotions...my feelings.

Nothing mattered.

I was used to being treated like s\*\*t, tonight wasn't any different.

I was all smiles when I walked into the ballroom, my shoulders squared and my chin held up high as I walked deeper into the crowd. I noticed when the crowd quietened, and all eyes ended up on me. My steps faltered, and my smile almost dropped; I wish I could say I was used to the attention, but I wasn't.

Beneath those scrutinizing eyes were countless thoughts I knew I was better off not knowing.

The disapproving glances from the few elders who decided to attend and the leering gazes of a few men...and women. It made my skin crawl. It always made my skin crawl.

Yet my mother always told me that my beauty was the only thing that made my existence not a waste. Cruel as her words were, it was true.

After all, it was my beauty that nally got me away from my parents.

But at what cost?

My scalp still ached from where Kane had pulled. How I managed to remain standing...I wasn't sure, but I knew I had to keep up the facade if I wanted the rest of the night to go easy for me.

A few of the neighboring alphas approached with their Lunas and Betas to greet me, asking after Kane while I easily diverted the conversation to something else, telling them he would be joining us soon.

The more powerful alphas lingered in the corner, eyes following my every movement as they waited for Kane to show. They didn't consider me worthy enough to be spoken to, that much I'd come to terms with.

My only job was to handle the pack house and anything related...at least that was what they thought.

I practically handled everything in this pack whenever Kane went for his rounds with his Beta or when he decided he wasn't feeling up to it. But the other alphas could never know. His reputation might be stained if they learned of it, so I never acted more than I was in front of them. They don't believe women should have a say in anything...the whole pack doesn't actually.

Kane wished for me to be the opposite of what the women in the continent were. And my mother raised me to be as docile as they expected.

Speaking of which. I watched as my mother approached me slowly, a satised smile stretching her red lips. Her red hair was pulled up in an elegant bun and her red dress hugged her curves like a second f\*\*\*\*\*g skin.

My mother looked only a few years older than me. One of the perks of being a warlock with great spell knowledge. She was beautiful, far more beautiful than I ever considered myself to be.

Tatyana Judas. In all her glory. She stopped in front of me and opened her arms.

I haven't seen her in months. You'd think I'd miss her a little bit but no...I secretly wished she would leave.

"My baby girl..." She purred, raising her thick brows, her eyes giving me a silent warning.

There were eyes on us.

I hugged her and pulled back with a smile."Mom," I replied in a low voice, "What are you doing here?"

I didn't invite her...or my father.

"Kane invited me," She shrugged.

My brows furrowed, I took a step back and crossed my arms over my chest, "He did?"

All of a sudden, I felt his sudden warmth behind me as his scent drifted into my nostrils, making me tense from both fear and relief. He was here, good.

Here I was thinking he wouldn't make it tonight.

"Mother-in-law," I heard Kane say from behind me with a low chuckle...one that was reserved for his polite conversations.

My mother's face turned red immediately and she let him take her hand and kiss it.

"You look as beautiful as ever, the most beautiful woman in Black Mountain pack like I always say," He grinned and met my eyes, "Isn't that right, Celine?"

I nodded, unable to nd the right words.

"Oh, Alpha!" My mother giggled obnoxiously, loud enough to garner the attention of the entire room and make everyone notice Kane's presence.

He was the most powerful Alpha in the continent, they respected him as much as they feared him.

"You atter me," My mother said in a breathy voice, touching his chest as if they were old pals. As if this wasn't the second time they were seeing each other since our wedding.

"Well, a woman as beautiful as you deserves all the compliments in the world,"

Kane was a sweet talker to those he chose but...this was getting a tad bit too sweet for my liking.

"We really should have a family dinner one of these days, Alpha," My mother suggested, hand on my biceps, speaking like I was completely invisible.

"I mean...it's been three years since the wedding,"

I watched the look in Kane's eyes shift, he held her arm and pulled it down from his, now a forced smile stretching his lips.

"Of course, if my wife wants it, that is," He said, making me blink in surprise.

I watched as my mother's pale face turned green, then red, then green again.

"Haha!" She laughed awkwardly, taking a slow step back, "Of course, Alpha..."

Then she looked at me with a strange look, perhaps expecting me to say something. I only offered her a small smile.

"I'm sure we can plan something once our workload is less, Mom," I dismissed her, a slight satisfaction spreading through my chest when I saw her annoyed expression. She still kept on her smile as she walked away.

"Your mother is a slut; she clearly wants to f\*\*k me," Kane said casually like he was speaking about the weather. I inched for some reason, I might hate my mother but that doesn't mean I would be happy to hear someone else call her names.

I look at him with furrowed brows, "Why would you say something like that?"

He shrugged, dipping his hands into his pocket as he gave a boyish grin. "I'm just saying, if you were as thirsty for me as your mother is...maybe we would get along better,"

His words stung badly. I gritted my teeth and forced down every word that threatened to spill from my lips.

Everyone who was anyone was here. I knew it wouldn't do much damage to Kane if he slapped me around in front of all these people...after all, it was a normal thing for these Alphas of the West to treat their women like s\*\*t to show dominance.

Kane's eyes narrowed in challenge as he smirked. He knew I wasn't going to say anything.

I inhaled deeply for the nth time that night. Reminding myself of all the reasons why I loved him and why I could ignore this.

He was just in a bad mood. He was projecting.

He isn't always like this.

"Let's just get through tonight, then we'll talk...about this,"

"The only thing your mouth would be doing tonight is sucking me off, my dear wife," He replied immediately in a singsong voice. His polite smile was up and as if getting the memo, people slowly began to approach us, cutting off our conversation and leaving me greatly unsettled.

The rest of the night went on without a hitch and Kane praised me a few times—in front of others—like he always did. Bragging about my skills and about how well we worked together.

It was received with forced and lustful smiles; I wish I could say I was used to it, but one hour into the event, I was already exhausted, at the brink of tears, and desperate to take off my heels.

Then suddenly, the entire ballroom erupted in shocked gasps, the chatter dying down. Kane and I stiffened as our eyes followed the crowd's line of sight.

Two identical men walked into the ballroom, radiating power, unlike anything I'd ever felt before. Looking like they owned the place. They were tall, burly men; their pale skin and attire were enough to tell us that they weren't from around here.

The marks on their necks...

"Men from the North?" I gasped in horror, I felt Kane's arm around my waist tighten almost painfully.

My stomach churned with dread. Because for the rst time since I met my husband, I saw pure fear in his eyes.

"Not just any men," His voice shook as he took a slow step back, "The North's Gammas." He declared.

There and then, I knew something bad was going to happen, something big.