

AN ENEMY CALLED MATE

Chapter 51



XANDER

“I will take my leave,” I uttered and moved away. Silently, I walked out of her room, but she wasn’t even bothered. She returned to her phone, while I shut the door.

I entered my room and sank into my bed. It was dark, and all that enveloped my mind was Ziva. I somewhat yearned for her scent and touch as I could not sleep.

It was past midnight, but the kissing scene kept surfacing in my mind. I am to be blamed, I should have listened to Alexei and asked her for a night. But what if she instantly rejects it?

“She is Darwin’s daughter, remember?” Maz uttered, and I huffed.

“I know,” I rolled my eyes, and reached for a pillow. I hugged it tightly and tried my best to sleep. Luckily, I dozed off.

The next morning, the same feeling lingered in my mind. Hold on... We are married. I smirked.

“Oh yeah, and you got married to her because you wanted revenge,” Maz echoed.

“Yes. Also, I need to play along to get her to open up to me and tell me everything she knows about the Crystal Moon Guardian,” I replied.

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I ordered the Omegas to move my belongings to Ziva's room as I planned to finally share the bedroom with her. After she returned from the pack hospital, she walked into the room and returned with furrowed brows.

"I found your clothes in the closet. Did the Omegas mix up your clothes with mine?" She questioned.

"No, I ordered them to move it in."

"Move in? Why?"

"We are married, and sharing a room should not be a big deal. Should it?" I questioned, and Ziva nodded, "Yes, it shouldn't."

"That reminds me. You mentioned that your wolf might be a bit rough when she is exposed to a change of surroundings, so I invited the sorceress."

"What?!" She exclaimed, with her eyes wide open. She maintained her composure and continued, "There is no need for her visit. I'm fine."

"I invited her already, and she will be here anytime soon," I responded.

Suddenly, I received a mind link from Lance, "The sorceress is here."

"Great, she is here." I walked towards the entrance, expecting the sorceress's arrival. She was in her black dress and she walked in with her assistant.

She brought her materials for checking Ziva's wolf, though Ziva seemed adamant about not checking her wolf.

The sorceress did it anyway, and when she had completed it, she told Ziva to excuse us. After discussing with the sorceress, the sorceress left.

A muffled moan echoed from Ziva's room.

I peeped through the partially opened door, and I saw Ziva on her bed. I stepped inside and noticed how she buried her face between her knees.

I approached her, while she raised her head, glancing up at me.

“She told you, didn’t she?” Her voice croaked. Her wet cheeks were visible, and I realized that she had been sobbing.

“Yes, she did,” I replied, recalling the sorceress’s statements.

Then, Ziva cried loudly and she hugged her knees tightly.

“It is not a bad thing,” I uttered, then I sat next to her to console her.

“Not being able to shift to your wolf does not make you useless. Also, you are not to be blamed for that,” I spoke reassuringly.

Raising her head, she mouthed, “Thank you.” Then, she pulled me into a soft embrace.

I didn’t mention that her wolf had been trapped under a spell. If I did, she would have been anxious or worried.

I can not forget the way I felt when Ziva’s arm touched my back. The first brush of her hand on my back sent a tingle through my body, like a spark of lightning.

The sensation of her touch heightened my senses and I felt Maz’s instincts coming to the surface. I wanted nothing more than to be closer to her, to feel her warmth and her heartbeat against my own.

ZIVA

I was so worried after the sorceress checked me. I assumed that Alpha Xander would become furious because I was wolfless and shove me out of the mansion. Unexpectedly, he walked in and said what no one had ever said to me.

I was always rejected by the pack members because I was wolfless, but this time I wasn’t. Fortunately, it didn’t raise any suspicion that I am not Alpha Darwin’s true daughter.

I pulled him into an embrace excitedly, and the minute I placed my arms around his back, I didn't wish to let go. It felt so comforting and warm.

Bang!

The door flew open, revealing Anji who stood in the doorway.

"Ziva, I-" She began but paused as soon as her gaze settled on me.

I moved away from the embrace and turned to Anji who glanced at me, then at Alpha Xander.

"Didn't anyone teach you how to knock?" Alpha Xander questioned her with a raspy tone.

She lowered her head instantly, "I apologize, Alpha. I will leave right away."

She walked out of the room, but I followed her. I was too embarrassed to return to the room and I wondered why Alpha Xander acted nicely to me. He didn't even move away from the hug and he was fine after hearing that I could not shift to my wolf.

As soon as Anji reached the landing, I caught up with her. Hastily, she gripped my wrist and dragged me into an empty room.

"What was that about, huh?" She inquired, closing the door behind her as she stepped in.

I shrugged my shoulders, "It was just a hug."

She narrowed her eyes, then proceeded to fold her arms, "First, he found out that you can't shift to your wolf, now, you are hugging him? What's going on?"

"I tried to stay away from the sorceress, but it happened anyway. So, he found out about my wolf... but he is somewhat fine with it," I replied and rubbed my arms.

“And the hug?” She raised an eyebrow. “Do you even recall why you are here? For some weeks now, you haven’t given any good feedback to Alpha Darwin.”

“I will. Everything will fall into place soon,” I replied, with a reassuring smile before reaching for the door handle.

“One more thing,” Anji said, stopping me in my tracks.

I turned around, a tight-lipped smile on my face. “Yes?”

“Do not get too close to Alpha Xander. From an innocent hug, it might lead to lust, then lust to intimacy, and intimacy to pregnancy. You don’t want to lose the deal for this, right?”

“I won’t lose the deal. Besides, it was just a hug, and nothing else is happening.”

“Nothing else? Tsk, if this continues, your heat period will hit you in no time.”

Chapter 52



ZIVA

I almost chuckled, “I can’t feel or even shift to my wolf form, how am I supposed to be in heat?”

“It is possible. Just stay away from him and focus on the deal.”

“I will and you have nothing to worry about,” I smiled and reached for the door handle. I opened the door and left the room.

Surprisingly, Alpha Xander seemed to be caring toward me. Since Alexei is at the hospital and Lance is busy with the pack, this gives me the perfect

opportunity. Also, the maids mentioned that Alpha Xander would be at the pack training house now.

I had doubts about one room, and I was eager to check it. The same room was the room for the welcoming ceremony where there was a broken fragment of a crystal-like object there. What if that is the Crystal Moon?!

Sigh... I just want my Mum to be released as soon as possible.

Last night, I was so worried about Nikolas and all I did was research about his pack. Sadly, there was no news about it... Perhaps that's because a werewolf's identity should be a secret.

As soon as the moon shone in the sky. I strode toward the room with the crystal-like fragment.

Surprisingly, there were no guards around the room. I glanced sideways, and there were no Omegas around. So, I touched the door knob and silently pushed the door open.

"What are you doing?" A masculine voice echoed.

My heart raced instantly. Have I been caught?

I turned around and spotted Alpha Xander. He approached me swiftly, while I tried to process what to say.

I needed a big lie, or I might get into trouble.

"I was just checking," I stammered, and managed to not stammer. "I was checking the mansion, so I came here to admire this room."

"This room?" He raised an eyebrow, "You've been here twice."

I faked a chuckle, "Yes, but I never had the chance to admire the beautiful paintings."

My palms became sweaty, so I rubbed them, hoping that he would believe me.

“Oh, that’s fine. You can go inside,” Alpha Xander replied. My eyes widened after he replied. Is this a joke?

“Oh, alright,” I replied and pushed the door open. The door opened, and some lights shone from the room.

I walked inside swiftly, and to my surprise, the broken fragment of the crystal-like object was still there. Earlier, I assumed that Alpha Xander moved the broken fragment into another room and that was why he permitted me to enter.

“It’s beautiful, isn’t it?” Alpha Xander questioned, and I smiled, “Yes, it is.”

“It might look very cheap and meaningless, but it’s priceless,” He narrated. I glanced at it and wondered if I could actually steal it.

“Can I-I touch it?” I asked him, stammering with every word. I was unsure of his answer, but I expected him to say yes.

He looked at me, smiled, and responded, “No.”

Ugh, that was unexpected. However if the Crystal Moon is as powerful as Darwin said, then touching this object will clear my doubts whether it’s the Crystal Moon or not.

“I’ve always admired it. Please let me touch it, please... Pretty please,” I mouthed, pouting like a child to make him accept and I held his arm.

“No,” he insisted.

“Alright, can I just have a closer look then?” I questioned, but inwardly, I planned to touch it as soon as I got close to it.

“Of course,” he replied. I stayed on my toe and pecked his cheek before rushing toward the fragment.

It was on a golden stand, and it had no protective cover on it or even lasers.

As I glanced at it, pretending to be admiring it while saying wow, Alpha Xander stood next to me like an inspector.

I seized the opportunity when I had one, and stylishly raised my hand to touch it. When my fingers tried to reach the object, I felt a grip on my wrist.

I glanced at my wrist and realized that Alpha Xander gripped my wrist.

“I told you, no touching,” He uttered with a strict tone.

“Sorry... It was just too beautiful,” I apologized sweetly.

“But what is its name anyway?” I questioned, with curiosity tinged in my voice.

He raised his eyebrow in suspicion and released his grip on my wrist. “Why are you suddenly interested in its name?”

“I’m just curious. It’s a beautiful object, I should know its name.”

“It has no name,” Alpha Xander replied, glancing at the door.

Instantly, I raised my finger and touched the object.

“Ouch!” I yelled and withdrew my finger. Touching the object was like dipping my finger into forty-eight hours boiling soup, more like lava. I’ve never touched lava, but that’s the best description I can give.

Alpha Xander turned back, “What?”

“Nothing,” I faked a smile, and placed my arm behind my back. I can still feel the awful warmth on my finger and it felt like my finger was being roasted.

The smile on my face didn’t last long, and my eyes had tears threatening to fall. They were at the edge because of the awful feeling on my finger.

Alpha Xander didn't seem to suspect. He moved away, while my brain alerted me to get water. All that was on my mind was water! It feels like my finger is being roasted itself!

Sadly, there was no tap or source of water in the room. Meanwhile, my finger had already turned red and swollen from that one touch.

So, I decided! I don't care about anything, all I need is water! I ran, attempting to walk out of the room, without caring about what Alpha Xander or the Omegas would think.

I mean, my finger will obviously explode and burn to ashes if the hot feeling continues.

I rushed past Alpha Xander and bumped into him. Hitting his body added to the pain. It was like hitting a pile of blocks. I managed to reach the landing and rush into the kitchen.

Chapter 53



ZIVA

Immediately I stepped into the kitchen, I jumped toward the sink. Fortunately, there was a bowl of water in the sink. I dipped my finger into the water, intending to make it extinguish the burning, hot feeling.

It didn't stop! The feeling didn't stop. I turned on the tap quickly. Allowing water to flow from the tap to my red, swelling finger, I hoped for a change.

But...

There was no change. It intensified the feeling. To be honest, tears dropped from my eyes like it was raining tears. I couldn't control them as the pain continued.

I turned off the tap and glared at my finger with my blurry eyes. I'm only doing this for my mother's release. Will I lose my finger for a mere object?

Footsteps echoed behind me. But why do I care? The pain I feel is enough to make me inhale my last breath. I sobbed at that moment, and I saw some hints of blue before me.

Alpha Xander, I guess. I raised my finger to his gaze and apologized from the bottom of my heart, with tears flowing down my cheeks like a flood. Even if I die now, I won't die with guilt of not apologizing for my selfishness.

"I'm so sorry!" I muttered as tears continued to stream down my face.

He smirked, or maybe he didn't. I could not see his face properly because everything was blurred. I felt his grip on my finger and some liquid touching it. It somewhat helped my finger, and the hot feeling on it was extinguished slowly.

I blinked and wiped the tears on my cheeks. I could see things properly and my finger was in his mouth... Alpha Xander's mouth.

Eww...

I attempted to pull my finger away, but his grip on it stopped me.

I stared at him, confused by his actions and a bit disgusted. But whatever... We kissed, so it's not a big deal, right?

"Uhm, I think that's enough," I voiced out, unable to hold back the disgusted look on my face. I mean, imagine my finger leaving his mouth with saliva all over it.

Luckily, he listened and let go of my finger. With that, my finger became normal.

“You never listen,” he spoke, then leaned forward. “If you continue to be disobedient, you will be punished severely.”

“Yeah. Punishments like keeping my finger locked in your mouth?” I blurted out, as I continued to glance at my finger. It felt like cold water extinguished the fire on it. Thank goodness.

“No, that can’t be termed as a punishment.”

“Yeah... It should be termed as harassment or sexual assault!” I yelled at him.

He blinked, “What?”

“It’s very disgusting to put a woman’s finger in your mouth. Very very!” I yelled, recalling how I felt when my finger was in his mouth.

He chuckled slightly, “I think you are being childish.”

“Childish? How will you understand when you’ve never been in such a situation, huh?!”

He let out a sigh and raised his finger, “Fine, put me in that situation. I would like to understand.”

I blinked, frustrated by his reply. I wanted to reply and yell, but my tongue was stuck.

Sigh... I should be very polite and nice towards him, especially if I want to find the Crystal Moon and have my mother.

I smiled and touched his raised finger, “It is best to just forget about what happened here. Forget that I touched the object, you licked my finger and wanted me to lick yours.”

“I didn’t want you to lick my finger. You are the one who seem disgusted after you committed a crime and I helped you.”

I smiled sweetly, “I deeply apologize for that.”

“For the punishment...”

I rolled my eyes when he wasn’t looking and let go of his finger.

“I expected our bedroom to be beautiful and inviting, but it was the other way round.”

Our bedroom? Our?

“It feels like you don’t even see it as an important place.”

“Is it supposed to be important?” I questioned, emphasizing the word, important.

“Of course. Many she-wolves dream of being in such a room, and you don’t seem to even make an effort to make it look inviting.”

I furrowed my brows, “Why? Why should it look inviting?”

Hold on, don’t tell me the reason for his gentle and nice acts was to get me to spend the night with him.

“It’s also my bedroom. So, I can decide how it looks or shouldn’t look.”

“Pfft,” I huffed under my breath.

“I hope to see the new change after I get back from an important meeting,” He spoke and walked out of the kitchen.

I had just exhausted my mind and energy on a finger, does he really expect me to decorate the room now?

Tsk, an Omega will do that, while I try to figure out my next plans to find the Crystal Moon.

As soon as Alpha Xander left the mansion, I called an Omega to decorate the room.

“What type of decoration do you want?” The Omega questioned.

“Inviting. He said he wanted it to look beautiful and inviting. Also, it’s an order from Alpha Xander. Be quick with it before he gets back or else...”

Before I completed my statement, she bowed her head, “I will do just as you say.”

“Make it snappy,” I smiled and walked out of the room. I went to the guest room and waited.

Afterward, another Omega rushed into the guest room. “Alpha Xander is back.”

Hastily, I sprang to my feet and rushed into my room. Luckily, the Omega left and she made the room beautiful.

Just then, something caught my eye. There were numerous roses on the bed, and thankfully, Alpha Xander was not in the room which means that he had not seen the roses.

I wondered what he would assume if he had seen them. Perhaps he will think that I’m trying to seduce him or something worse.

Chapter 54



ZIVA

I took the bed cover and rearranged it. I poured the roses on the floor and pushed them underneath the bed.

“What are you doing?” I heard a masculine voice say.

I paused in my tracks, and glanced up. To my surprise, I spotted Alpha Xander. He moved away from the bathroom. Just then, I realized that he had been in the bathroom.

He was in a shirt with a few buttons undone. I gulped and looked away.

“I was arranging...” I muttered, and faced him, “How long have you been there?”

“A minute or two. And what did you do to the roses? They were beautiful.”

“It was arranged here accidentally, so I threw them away,” I replied with a fake smile.

He dropped his cell phone on the table, then he returned to the bathroom with a towel.

As soon as he shut the door, I heard the gushing sound of water.

I exhaled loudly like I had been holding my breath. Okay... I just have to endure, endure his presence on the bed, next to me. Sharing the bed with him for the first time was awful. I think I would rather lay on the couch.

I picked another blanket from the closet and laid on the couch. The couch in the room was small, so I had to squeeze myself in it. It wasn't comfortable at all as I faced the couch.

But it's better than staying on the bed, floor, or in another room.

The gushing sound I heard earlier stopped, and I heard a creak before Alpha Xander spoke.

“At times, it feels like you are avoiding me.”

“Who wouldn't?” I replied bluntly.

“That is unexpected from someone like my wife.”

I felt warmth embracing me, and it felt a bit suffocating. Though, that didn't stop me from responding to his answer. "Wife? I didn't get married to you willingly, so let's not prioritize this marriage like it's real. It's more like forced or arranged."

"Why would you be forced into a marriage? You are Darwin's precious daughter."

I turned around, feeling more heat/warmth. Now, I could see the room and my surroundings. "I am Darwin's precious daughter. Why would I get married to a man I barely know? Why would Alpha Darwin let me marry his rival? Does that even make any sense?"

As I turned, my gaze fell on Alpha Xander who towered over me.

"Arranged marriage or forced, it doesn't matter, as long as trust exists," He replied, staring down at me with his charming blue eyes.

My heart raced at the little distance between us. He leaned in, causing the heat around me to intensify.

His lips gently crashed against mine before he trailed down kisses on my neck.

I almost let out a moan. Then, I recalled Anji's statement.

'Do not get too close to Alpha Xander. From an innocent hug, it might lead to lust, then lust to intimacy, and intimacy to pregnancy. You don't want to lose the deal for this, right?'

"Stop," I muttered, raising my hands to his chest to create some distance between us.

I stared directly into his dark, lustful gaze and uttered, "Stop, I don't want this."

He paused. His brows furrowed as a look of disappointment crossed his face. I repeated my statement firmly, "I'm not interested."

Without pestering me, he moved away, while I heaved a sigh of relief. I grabbed the blanket and walked towards the door, intending to leave the room. I planned to stay in a guest room instead.

“You don’t have to leave because of what happened,” I heard Alpha Xander say.

“It’s best I do,” I replied and walked out of the room.

As I closed the door, it felt like the warmth around me vanished. I became enveloped with cold, and somewhat I wanted him. I wanted to feel his warmth again or have him around my body.

However, that might only ruin my plans and cause my mother to be confined in that cold cell for more months. I exhaled slowly, then rubbed my elbows to reduce the cold feeling.

Afterward, I strode into the guest room. I sank into the comfy bed and covered myself with the blanket I brought. To my amazement, I dozed off quickly and had a dream.

Funny, the dream was just blurred traces of me and a man making out before he sank his teeth into my neck.

The moment I woke up, I had to rush into the bathroom. I gazed at the mirror and watched my reflection. I inspected my neck, hoping that there was no bite mark on it.

Fortunately, there wasn’t. I touched my chest and heaved a sigh. The dream felt so real, and I could actually feel the warmth on my neck and between my legs.

I was still in my clothes and there was no physical evidence of intimacy. So, I moved forward and turned on the tap. Then, I washed my face, reminding myself that it was just a dream, and nothing else.

I walked out of the bathroom and my gaze fell on someone. Instantly, my heartbeat paused.

“Why do you look terrified? It’s just me,” Anji spoke. I clenched my chest and calmed myself.

“Sorry, I thought it was someone else,” I replied and returned to the bed.

Anji crossed her arms, “And who is that someone else? Alpha Xander?”

“I didn’t mention any name,” I admitted, and she let out a huff.

“Why are you here anyway? Did Alpha Darwin send a message or something?” I questioned her, as I coiled on the bed and covered myself with my blanket.

“No, he didn’t. But do you recall that this is the same room I dragged you into when I wanted to speak with you?”

“Yeah,” I muttered, wanting to drift back to sleep, “It’s the same room you dragged me roughly into.”

“Exactly!” She exclaimed. I heard footsteps approach me and her weight pressed down the bed by my side.

“I was about to go to your room, to check up on you. Then, I heard moans while walking.”

Chapter 55



ZIVA

My ears perked up instantly, “Moans?”

I turned my body and faced her.

Anji nodded, "Yes. It was not loud. But I think it is because I was near the room, that's why I could hear it properly."

I stammered, "Did you find the person moaning?"

"Unfortunately, I couldn't. The female seemed to shut her mouth when I was near this guest room."

I heaved a sigh. Perhaps I was the one... Certainly, I was the one, after the messy dream I had and how realistic it felt.

I'm certain that if Anji found out that I was the one, she would have given me an earful.

"But you know what?" Anji continued.

"What?" I asked, a bit nervous that she found out.

"I suspect those silly Omegas. I'm sure one of them met with a guard," Anji replied. Then, I smiled, relieved by her response.

"Yeah, it must be one of them," I nodded.

She sprang to her feet, almost leaving and it urged me to ask her questions about the dream I had.: ©.

"Anji..." I called out with a low tone.

"Yes?"

"I was thinking about what you narrated now," I lied. "What if the female Omega didn't meet up with a guard? What if she had a messy dream where she got marked and moaned in reality? It is not a bad thing, right?"

Anji creased her brows, giving me a glare of suspicion.

"I'm just asking. It's just a question," I shrugged my shoulders.

Anji's brows leveled, and she muttered, "If that happened, then the female Omega should be prepared to have her heat period soon."

I gulped. If I have my heat period now, I will be in so much pain throughout with no one to help relieve the pain.

"Or maybe..." Anji began. I gazed at her quickly, hoping that she had a better reason.

"Possibly the female Omega has not been marked and she is expecting a pup."

I rolled my eyes at her response. I can't be pregnant.

I gasped. Does that mean that the heat period will soon hit me like Anji said?

"It can just be a mere dream," Anji uttered, raising a little hope within me.

"I'm not sure. You know, I don't know other she-wolves experience," She spoke.

"I understand," I gave her a reassuring smile.

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The next morning, I tip-toed to my room to have my morning routine. I wanted to enter the room silently, just in case, Alpha Xander was asleep.

Opening the door slowly and quietly, I peeked inside the room. Surprisingly, there was no one on the bed. I shifted my gaze to the couch, and Alpha Xander was not there.

Swiftly, I checked the bathroom and realized that no one was in the room.

I did my morning routine, ignoring his absence. Then I walked into the closet to get a dress. Strangely, Alpha Xander's clothes were not there.

Sigh... Seemed like he moved out and returned to his room.

It suddenly feels lonely... I smacked my forehead. Oh, snap out of it! You've always been alone, this should not make any difference.

Time flew quickly, and the moon shone in the sky.

I hadn't seen Alpha Xander around, and everyone seemed busy, even Anji who worked here as my assistant.

I conversed with an Omega, "I have not seen Alpha Xander for some time now, is everything alright?"

She smiled, "Everything is fine. It's common for the Alpha to be absent for some days. To be honest, his presence in this mansion after your marriage was surprising to everyone. He had not been that present in this mansion and he left last night."

"Oh, alright," I dismissed her. With what she said, Alpha Xander must be busy.

Jealousy settled deep in my stomach, and my thoughts diverted. Perhaps, he got annoyed after I said I was uninterested and left to be with his mistress.

I bit my lips, feeling a bit heartbroken since my assumption could be right.

A few days passed with Alpha Xander's absence, and many failed attempts to steal the broken fragment in that room. The guards watching the room had been more watchful and I could not get into the room no matter how much I tried.

Anji informed me that a solution or let me say an antidote has been found to cure Alexei perfectly. I went to the pack hospital to visit him with his favorite food.

I met the Head Omega earlier and she arranged the food before I reached the hospital.

"Are you feeling better?" I heard from inside the ward. I opened the door silently, as my gaze fell on Alexei and a female nurse.

I rolled my eyes. "Let me guess, you are checking up on him?"

The nurse walked out of the ward politely, without saying a word. Then I dropped the flask on the table and gave Alexei a suspicious glare.

"I'm an adult," he spoke, and I shifted my gaze to his feet. They looked normal, but a bit swollen.

"I assumed that you would focus on getting back to your feet. But oh! It seems like you are enjoying the hospital and the staff's services," I uttered with a playful smile.

He shook his head in disapproval, "Not really. The drugs they give are enough to make my head spin."

"And the females?" I raised an eyebrow.

"Not bad."

I sat on a nearby chair while he leaned forward, analyzing food.

"Oh please, don't tell me it's the same freaking food!" He grumbled.

"Is it not good?" I questioned, sad and curious. If it isn't, then I wasted my time to bring it.

"Ugh, just because I'm sick, I've been eating the same fucking food. I think I will have to add it to my list of un-favorite foods."

"My bad. I wasn't aware of that."

He sat upright on the bed, and complained, "Even Xander did the same before he had some lipstick stains on his lips. I'm certain that he is planning to pump my body with the same food."

Lipstick stains? My ears perked up, and I faced Alexei. He mentioned a lipstick stain which means that Alpha Xander visited him recently with a lipstick stain.

I gasped, and my heart squeezed.

I have not seen Alpha Xander for some days now, and we have not been close to each other, talk less of kissing. Did Alpha Xander really leave to meet his mistress?

“When?” I questioned Alexei to be certain that Alpha Xander had been with his mistress.

He looked away from the flask, and when he gazed at me, he clasped his hand above his mouth.

He blinked and stammered, “I didn’t say anything.”

## Chapter 56



ZIVA

Possibly, Alexei was covering up for his brother, Xander. So, I gave Alexei a deadly glare to make him confess.

“I didn’t say anything,” Alexei repeated.

“You mentioned that he had lipstick stains on his lips a few seconds ago,” I muttered.

“It was a mistake,” He replied with wide-opened eyes.

Sounds like a lie. “Just tell me the truth, Alexei.”

“Alright,” He sighed, attempting to say the truth faster than I expected. I leaned forward to listen attentively.

He let out a sigh, and voiced out, "Ziva, Bother is having an affair behind your back."

I gasped, and my heart sank. Tears formed in my eyes immediately. I knew it! My instincts were right! Xander left to be with his mistress. He is cheating.

I sobbed inwardly, almost breaking out physically.

I know I have been adamant about not consummating our marriage, and I termed it as fake or forced. But that doesn't mean that he should go ahead to have an affair.

"I am to be blamed," Alexei continued. I blinked the tears in my eyes away and focused on his statements. "I told him to keep it a secret because you might get annoyed."

Certainly, I will be annoyed. Right now, I'm annoyed and heartbroken. How could he do such a thing?

I clenched my fist, and managed to not sound like a broken piece, "Who is his mistress?"

"Sorcha?" I asked.

Sorcha seemed like a nice person. She is muscular and powerful, good enough to be his Luna. She must have been the mistress since those fucking bitches love to be close to married women!

"I said the same thing!" Alexei exclaimed, "But he said she isn't the one."

"Then who? Is it Anji?"

"I doubt that. Anji is not his type."

I heaved a sigh of relief. Okay, his mistress is not someone I know. Great...

"What is she like? Very gorgeous?"

"Hmm, he said a lot, but I remembered when he said very pretty."

“Alright,” I maintained my composure and watched him grumble.

“No worries, I will send the Omega to bring another flask of food,” I uttered, and he nodded.

“Thank you. But I hope you are not worried or annoyed about what I said?”

I faked a smile, “Not at all. Why will I be?”

Alexei touched his chest and spoke, “Okay, that’s a relief then.”

XANDER

I received an important mind link from Lance after Ziva left the bedroom with a blanket. That caused me to leave the mansion at night.

Because of the important announcement from the mind link, I traveled to a nearby city with Sorcha. Sorcha is a strong female warrior and she serves as my assistant and bodyguard in case of an emergency.

It took a few days before we could finally reach the human city. It turned out that Sorcha had prepared the car and food upon receiving Lance’s mind link.

Meanwhile, Lance would stay in the pack. He will serve as my defense if this traveling was an enemy’s plan to move me out of my pack and attack the pack. He is very strong and capable.

Also, I wouldn’t be leaving the pack if Lance had not received the announcement that Alphas are needed to meet up in the human’s city. I would have sent Lance instead, while I stayed at the pack.

As soon as the car reached the human city, different scents wafted into my nostrils. Each scent was nothing compared to Ziva’s scent. Hers was more alluring and inviting.

I shut my eyes, recalling how I kissed her lips and her fair neck.



“Alpha,” A voice jolted me out of my thoughts. I opened my eyes and Sorcha bowed her head.

“I apologize for disturbing,” She uttered.

I clenched my fist, annoyed at her disruption, “You’d better have a very good reason for doing so.”

Sorcha lowered her gaze, “Alpha, other Alphas will be present in the location that was sent. Including Alpha Darwin.”

I clenched my fist tightly. Maz snapped out in a second, but I controlled him. His claws pierced my palms and I felt blood gushing out of the wounds.

“Pfft, he must be preparing a bad egg to hatch at his chosen time,” Maz spoke.

“Yes, he is,” I replied.

Definitely, they planned the meeting in a human city to avoid a bloody fight since no human knows about our identity.

The car halted to a stop. I stepped out of it and headed into the tall building ahead. Sorcha came walking behind me. We strode into the building and we were greeted by a group of werewolves in the same clothing.

I was ushered into a room with double doors. A guard opened the door, and upon opening it, I spotted a long table with different Alphas sitting by its side.

I walked inside elegantly and sat on an empty chair, next to the other Alpha. Then, I heard a swooshing sound.

The double door swung open, revealing Alpha Darwin.

I scoffed inwardly, as soon as my gaze fell on him. His gaze fell on me too, and I intensified my gaze, using my Alpha’s aura.

He looked away and sat quietly.

Then, an Alpha stood and cleared his throat.

“The Alphas are around, and the meeting can begin,” The Alpha began, “We invited you here, because of Alpha Nikolas’s pack who had been attacked during a party of his.”

“Tsk, isn’t he Alpha Darwin’s gullible son-in-law?” An Alpha spoke, chuckling at his statement.

I turned to Alpha Darwin and noticed his furrowed brows. A look of disappointment crossed his face, and it made me excited.

“Yes, he is my son-in-law,” Alpha Darwin interfered, causing the other antagonizing Alpha to stop chuckling. “But that doesn’t mean that you should forget about how he contributed to your pack and helped you endlessly. Just one mistake shouldn’t justify his personality.”

“One mistake? He ruined the pack member’s life. The children, family, warriors, everything! Everything was wiped off!” Another Alpha interjected.

I leaned back in my chair and watched how the drama would unfold. It was quite interesting to see them antagonize Alpha Darwin.

## Chapter 57



XANDER

“Yes, they were. But it was a mistake,” Alpha Darwin replied, and a loud bang echoed.

The Alpha who was announcing roared, “Stop your nonsense! We came here to assemble and work together, not pick a fight and scatter!”

The Alpha antagonizing Alpha Darwin became quiet, and Alpha Darwin fell silent.

The announcing Alpha continued, "As I said earlier, Alpha Nikolas's pack was attacked. You know, he has been a very good contributor to some pack's Alpha and it will be great to help his pack while he needs urgent help."

"His pack is good as dead. Is it still possible to save the pack?" An Alpha voiced out.

"Yes, it's possible," The announcing Alpha nodded, "Right now, Alpha Nikolas and a few of his pack members are hiding. However, the Bloodbath pack had surrounded the pack, causing them to be unable to leave because they had only a few warriors with them."

"What a coward..." The antagonizing Alpha sneered silently, "He saved himself, but he could not save the pack. Very irresponsible of him. It's time he gets dethroned anyway. To be precise, his father received the Alpha's title by cheating."

"Not now, Alpha Barral," The announcing Alpha cut in, "The pack needs to be rescued, and dethronement will only add fuel to the fire. If he is dethroned now, the pack members will be more vulnerable to attacks and they may end up as slaves."

"Cut to the chase, what do you suggest the Alphas do to help the pack?" Another Alpha interjected.

The announcing Alpha answered, "You can offer supplies, money, or protection, by sending your warriors to stand guard over Nikolas's pack. You can also initiate negotiations with the Bloodbath pack to try to end the conflict peacefully."

I scoffed, feeling impatient and annoyed at the idea of helping Alpha Darwin's son-in-law. He has been the problem in our pack, why should I help?

“If your only reason for this meeting was to waste my time, then you’ve made a big mistake. I’m not going to play helpful with Darwin, so let’s cut to the chase or I’ll be out the door,” I spoke directly.

Everyone in the room fell silent.

The announcing Alpha continued, “I understand if you’re not interested in helping. I appreciate your time, and I’ll respect your decision to leave.”

With that, I pushed the chair back and strode toward the double doors. The guard opened the door and I left the room... Even the building.

“Alpha, how did it go?” Sorcha asked behind me, as she managed to reach my pace.

“It was a waste of time.” I turned to her with my activated Alpha aura. “I’ll expect you and Lance to do your work before you send me a mind link in the future. I don’t have time for pointless meetings that have nothing to do with my benefits. I expect you both to be better informed and more prepared before you try to get my attention again.”

She lowered her head, and spoke respectfully, “I understand, Alpha.”

I moved away, striding towards my car until a particular scent hit my nose.

I was familiar with that scent, but I could not just detect the owner. It was alluring and it was different from the human’s scent.

I turned back. I noticed that there were a lot of people in the scent’s direction, and Maz urged me to find out. I was also eager to find out, for no reason.

I barged into the crowd, following the scent until I met the owner. It was a female with long, dark hair that reached her shoulder. Her back faced me, so I could not see her face.

I reached out my hand to touch her shoulder, but she flinched before I could. Suddenly, she turned around and faced me.

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Face to face, I saw Rose standing before me, her eyes shining brightly as she smiled, a smile that reached all the way to her eyes. I felt my own lips curl into a grin, unable to resist the warmth of her gaze.

But then, I thought.

“Is this an imagination?” I muttered to myself.

Rose’s bright eyes suddenly watered, the sparkle fading as tears welled up.

She bit her lip, trying to hold them back. Meanwhile, I blinked to ensure that what I saw was real. I opened my eyes and within a second, her arms were wrapped around my body.

Her head rested on my chest, and I felt my heart skip.

This is really Rose! My Rose!

We entered the car to avoid unnecessary stares and I couldn’t help but stare at her throughout. She ate a little and complained about the amount of snacks sold in this city.

Then, she caught my gaze and smiled. Leaning over, she wrapped her arm around my elbow, pulling me closer. I could feel her skin against my skin, and it gave a satisfying feeling as it made contact.

“I missed you so much,” Rose uttered with a sweet tone.

Silently, I sighed in relief. I assumed that it was a waste of time to arrive in the human city. But I was blessed with Rose’s presence.

“I recall the war, and I wonder how you ended up here. You didn’t even try to return to the pack,” I scolded her, feeling excited and annoyed at the same time.

“Well, I don’t remember a lot. But I do remember being in an unknown place. I didn’t know how to get back into the pack or even mind-link you. Everything was just messed up until I found my way to this busy city,” She narrated.

Well, after the war, everyone thought she was dead, even the sorceress. I didn’t believe it. I was chained up because I was acting miserable, and the pack members had to perform the burial ceremony.

During the ceremony, she would have been thrown far away from the pack and she won’t be able to return. Sigh... It is a tradition in my pack to do such.

“It’s fine now, you are safe with me,” I replied and kissed her forehead.

My wolf, Maz on the other hand was too excited to even speak. He was finally with his mate.

## Chapter 58



ZIVA

The moon hung low in the sky, and it marked another night without being able to get hold of the Crystal Moon in that room.

I looked through the window and noticed an expensive car moving through the driveway. It halted and a silhouette figure stepped out of it.

Could that be Alpha Xander?

I walked out of my room and hurried toward the entrance. I heard footsteps approach me, and I looked.

Then, I spotted Alpha Xander with a woman by his side. The woman looked gorgeous and slim as Alexei described. My heart squeezed at that moment.

Was this the same woman who kissed Alpha Xander?

Alpha Xander assisted her to walk into the mansion. Upon seeing me, he paused and the woman standing next to him furrowed her brows.

“Who is she?” The woman asked, with curiosity tinged in her voice.

He turned to her with a smile, “It’s a long story-”

My heart broke. That was the same way Nikolas denied my relationship with him when he was with Tania.

My eyes watered, but I held back my tears. I walked away since I was the third wheel, and returned to my room with a restless feeling.

How could he do that? Even if he had a mistress, she shouldn’t be permitted to enter this mansion. I mean, we are married. He could have given her another place to stay.

The more I thought about it, the more my heart sank with bitterness. I tossed on the bed, but I could not sleep.

XANDER

As soon as I entered the mansion with Rose, she glanced inside and questioned, “Who is she?”

I spotted Ziva, and faced Rose with a smile, “It’s a long story. You need to get some rest now.”

“Alright,” Rose nodded. I turned back to Ziva and realized that she left.

I escorted Rose to her room and tucked her into the bed. As soon as I moved away from the bed, she gripped my hand and pouted.

“Don’t leave me. I don’t want to be alone,” Rose spoke.

She must have been frightened because of her loneliness while she was in the human city. Ugh.

Kissing her forehead, I tried to convince her, "You will be fine."

"And you?" She asked, with a concerned look on her face.

"I'm always fine. I need to deal with some important things while you rest," I replied.

Swiftly, she released her grip on my hand and nodded. "Okay."

With that, I left her room. As soon as I closed the door, and faced the doorway, Ziva appeared.

"You've been absent for days or weeks. Now, you are back, you arrived with a woman," Ziva uttered, with an annoyed look on her face.

"Perhaps if you contacted me, I would have explained," I replied.

I walked away from her and hurried footsteps approached me.

"Why would I do that? You left willingly," Her voice echoed.

Suddenly, she obstructed my path and crossed her arms, "Who is that lady? Your mistress? Even if you wanted to have a mistress, fine! Get an apartment for her and let her stay there."

"Will you shut it?" I snapped angrily.

Her eyes widened like she was shocked by my outburst. She became mute, but I continued, ensuring that she understood Rose's position.

"Rose is not my mistress or whatever you think she is. She is my mate."

As I spoke, she blinked rapidly, as if fighting back tears, and her voice lowered to a near whisper. "She is your mate? Why was I not aware that you had a mate? We've been married-"

I cut her off, "We've been married; not because we were mates or lovers. Previously, you mentioned that it should be termed as a forced or arranged marriage. Let it be that way."



Her crossed arms dropped, and she bit her lips. "So who am I to you? What would you tell your mate if she questioned you?"

"You are Darwin's daughter. We got married for our benefit. It's as simple as that," I replied quickly.

She nodded and moved away from my path.

"Also, I'm not cheating or betraying you. These are just mere circumstances that are bound to happen since this marriage would never work. You can contact Darwin to know if he has a problem with Rose-"

Ziva interrupted, her voice croaking and her eyes bright red. "There is no need to contact him. Alpha Darwin... I mean, my Father won't have any problem with that. He supports it and practices it. I should get some sleep now."

"Sure, sure!" I replied. She turned around and walked away. Immediately she reached the landing, she rushed into her room without turning back.

Great, I explained to her, that I have my mate and can further proceed to ruining Granelma Pack and having the Crystal Moon Guardian to myself.

ZIVA

Alpha Xander's statements sank into my head. My stomach churned, my throat heated up and tears welled up in my eyes. I closed the door and stepped into my room.

His statements kept replaying in my head and I couldn't shake it off. I burst into tears that I had been holding and drowned in the bitter feeling in my heart.

I cried my heart out, with my face buried in my palms. First, Nikolas betrayed me. Now, Alpha Xander.

No, Alpha Xander is different. He was merciful enough to explain politely and not lie to my face.

The next day, I was greeted with loud bangs. It gave me an alarming headache that stirred me from sleep. I fluttered my eyes open and carried myself to the source of the bang, the door.

Opening it slowly, my face came in contact with Anji's face.

She crinkled her nose, "Goodness, have you been drinking?"

Ignoring her statement, I opened the door widely. Silently, she walked in and scanned the messy bed and scattered room.

"I cried too much and made a mess. You should order the Omegas to clean it," I muttered, my words sounding like it was jam-packed.

"What are you even saying?" Anji questioned.

I felt disturbed and annoyed. So, I yelled, "Don't be an annoying brat. Do your job and stop bugging me!"

"Bugging? Did you hit your head or something?" Anji questioned, sounding irritated. "You made yourself a mess, over what? A man?"

"Yes," I slurred, "A man. Why do I feel like my whole existence is a curse or a stepping stool?"

"You feel that way because you are a fool! Why would you think of a man you barely know? Alpha Xander is no one's reach."

I turned to her, sitting up quickly, "How did you know he is the one?"

"I know you've been ignorant to all my advice, and I knew you liked him. It was very obvious."

I narrowed my eyes, "Yeah, I'm cursed to love men who do not love me in return. They give bad for my good, and you must have noticed."

"Oh, come here," Anji uttered. She moved towards me and raised my chin.

"Focus on the deal, and move on," Anji spoke.

I nodded in response, “I just wish the deal ended quickly. I don’t want to be here.”

## Chapter 59



ZIVA

“I also don’t want to be here. Now get up, and get dressed. The Omegas are organizing a party, so you should be prepared,” Anji spoke quickly. Crossing the room, she picked up the soft, fluffy blanket and carried it over to the bed carefully.

Draping it over the mattress, she smoothed it out, ensuring that it was perfectly straightened and covered the entire surface.

“Party? Why are they organizing a party?” I questioned curiously.

Anji turned away from the bed, and replied, “A welcome party for the Alpha’s mate.”

“Oh...” I moved away from the bed and approached Anji, “Speaking about that, have Nikolas’s pack been rescued?”

“Not yet. The packs that attacked are very strong, they can’t surrender to others easily. Even Nikolas and a few of his warriors are in hiding.”

“Great, that must be such a relief to Alpha Darwin.”

“Pfft... Tania is missing, adding more fuel to the fire. She can’t mind link anyone, and possibly, she had been captured by that awful Bloodbath pack.” Anji voiced out. I gasped, realizing what had happened. Tania must be in a lot of trouble.

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I changed into a floral dress and went to the dining hall to have my breakfast. As soon as I reached there, the maids greeted me politely. I sat on a chair and food was served.

The Alpha's mate sat opposite me. I must say, she is a very beautiful woman. She had dark hair, deep brown eyes, and was curvy. She ate silently without glancing at me.

After having breakfast, I and Anji went to the boutique that was located near the mansion to get some clothes. The boutique was a big building with high-quality clothes. Anji suggested that I change into some clothes.

I did, but none was to my liking until I wore a black dress that reached my ankle. The design on it was beautiful and it was not revealing a lot.

"I'll take this," I said to the fitting room attendant.

She smiled, "Let me ring it up for you."

Suddenly, a female voice echoed, "I'll take that dress."

I turned and spotted Alpha Xander's mate, Rose. She glared at me with disgust in her eyes and approached me swiftly.

"I want this dress," She said with an authoritative tone. I almost let out a chuckle. I chose the dress already. Did she do this deliberately?

"Lady Rose, Lady Ziva chose the dress," The fitting room attendant spoke. Instantly, a smack pierced the silence in the boutique.

Rose slapped the fitting room attendant and she voiced out, "I am the Luna here. Get the dress or leave this pack!"

Another fitting room attendant interfered. She ushered me into the fitting room and begged me to change the gown I chose.

She sifted through some gowns, pulling out a few options. "These would look even better on you than the one you picked out," she cooed, laying them out in front of me. "They're so beautiful, and they fit you perfectly."

I stared at the gowns in front of me, unable to decide which one I liked the most. I felt annoyed by her sweet talk. She was only doing this for Rose. "Let Rose have the gown she chose. I think I've got enough to choose from my closet," I finally replied, a hint of annoyance in my voice. I was tired of the whole shopping experience and just wanted to be done with it.

With that, I changed into my floral dress and exited the fitting room.

"That daughter of a b-tch. She sure knows how to ruin someone's mood," Anji clenched her jaw.

"It's fine. I was only interested in getting some clothes because you suggested it," I replied and Anji creased her brows.

"If you keep doing this-"

I continued my statement, "I will leave this pack soon. Let bygones be bygones."

The party was about to begin, and I felt the need to clear my head. I strode outside the mansion, taking a walk around.

The sound of heavy footsteps hit my ear. I turned around and spotted a man running towards me. Some guards were chasing him too. He ran past me and fell. The bag he held rolled onto the floor. Glancing around, he picked up his heels and forgot to take the bag.

The guards ran after the man, as they were not concerned about the bag. Was that a thief? I became curious. It urged me to check the bag and see what was inside. So, I glanced sideways, ensuring that no one was around. Then, I took the bag and moved to another side.

When I was in a safe spot, I opened the bag. To my greatest surprise, I saw the broken fragment, The Crystal Moon! Perhaps, it's fake. What if it's real?

I hugged the bag, and muttered to myself, "Ziva, this is your chance." Since the Crystal Moon was in the bag, I didn't feel any burns on my hands.

Swiftly, I brought out my phone and ordered Anji to bring my purse. She brought it as I ordered and I shoved the bag off. Ensuring that the Crystal Moon was safe in my purse without anyone knowing, I said to Anji, "Now, all I need are the divorce papers."

"Divorce papers? What are you talking about?" Anji asked with furrowed brows.

"I need you to arrange the divorce papers. It should be prepared by tomorrow so that I can hand it over to Alpha Xander as soon as possible," I whispered.

"Why do you want to divorce him?" Anji questioned. I became irritated by her tons of questions.

"Just do as I say. We will finally be able to leave this pack after Alpha Xander signs the divorce papers," I told her. With that, I adjusted my dress and returned to the mansion excitedly.

I hid my purse under my bed, and the party began swiftly.

## Chapter 60



ZIVA

The party began swiftly...

Everyone in the ballroom looked excited, most especially Rose.

She had her arm linked around Alpha Xander's elbow as they walked and discussed with other influential werewolves. Tsk, she didn't even wear the dress I chose earlier.

I glanced down at everyone and became anxious.

Will I really leave this pack after the divorce?

I shook my head, repeating the same statement to myself.

"You are not needed or wanted. You should leave."

I heard a loud exhale, as a masculine voice muttered, "So pathetic. I can't believe that she is back in this pack."

The voice sounded close. I looked at my side and spotted Alexei in a black tuxedo.

"You came back. You didn't tell me that you got discharged from the hospital," I told him.

Alexei raised an eyebrow and grumbled, "I thought you and Brother wanted me to live in the hospital until the end of my days."

I waved my hands, telling him the truth quickly, "We will never want that."

"Pfft... That's the impression I got," Alexei replied.

As he stood on the landing of the grand staircase, he leaned his weight against the cold, iron balustrade.

Then, his gaze fell on Rose and he exhaled, "You're not actually going to leave Rose with Xander, are you?"

"Why are you asking that question? Obviously, she is his mate and I'm just the... Other woman," I replied, with sadness tinged in my voice.

"Oh, come on. Rose is just a gold digger, nothing else."

“But Alpha Xander thinks of her differently, like he is blinded-”

“He is blinded by their mate bond.” He clenched his fist, and continued his speech, “That same Rose, I have seen her in the human city countless times. She is just putting up an act to gain Xander’s trust.”

“What do you mean by an act?”

“While I was away, there was a war, and everyone believed that Rose died. She was cast away, but I met her in the human city... With her husband and a child.”

I chuckled, almost too loudly, “Is this a joke?”

Alexei gazed at me sternly, “I am dead serious. She has a child.”

“Perhaps you misunderstood. Rose here, is with a perfect figure. If she had a child, it would be very obvious with her tummy and shape.”

He rolled his eyes, “I knew that you wouldn’t believe me. Once she pulls off her mask, you will understand.”

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XANDER

The party went well, and I ensured that I had the guards around. I didn’t want to end up like foolish Nikolas, so I prepared more guards and a fake Crystal Moon beforehand.

In no time, I received a mind link of a theft occurring in the mansion.

Just like I had expected, someone stole the fake Crystal Moon and picked up their heels. He or she must be so foolish to think that I will watch that happen and let him go scot-free.

I had prepared for this scene and arranged for some able-bodied guards to arrest him.



He would also be tortured for stepping into my mansion before I make him an example to anyone who tries to steal the Crystal Moon.

To be precise, the punishment for stealing such a precious object is death... Instant death.

Anyone who gets caught with the fake or real Crystal Moon will be beheaded at once!

As I watched everyone in the ballroom, the thief was plastered in my mind. If he had been caught or not, I felt a bit restless.

“Any luck?” I mind linked Lance.

“Caught him. He had been cuffed and sent to the rogue’s cell.”

I smirked, “Excellent.”

Rose who had her arm linked around my elbow voiced out, “Hmph, it doesn’t even feel like this party was organized to welcome me. Everyone is busy with something else and you aren’t even paying a single attention to me.”

I turned to her, and just then, I noticed her lips that she downturned with a sullen face.

“We have all the time to ourselves,” I replied calmly, and she let out a huff of annoyance.

“You always say that. Then the next morning, you’ve left the mansion to be busy with pack works as usual.”

I pinched her cheek and smiled, “I promise that from now on, I’ll spend more time with you than I ever have before.”

“Fine, just fulfill it,” She said, her downturn lips curling into a smile.

Suddenly, Rose pulled her arm away from my elbow. She moved further like she was searching for someone.

Then, she glanced around, and whispered, “But where’s that sly witch? I haven’t laid eyes on her all day. You’d think she’d be out, causing mischief as usual.

Perhaps she’s up to something even more disgraceful than usual, and that’s why she’s been keeping out of sight. Who knows what that sly woman is capable of?”

I furrowed my brows, confused by her statement, “Who are you referring to as a witch?”

“Who else?” Rose said, turning to me with a suspicious look in her eyes. “If it wasn’t your witch of a wife, then who else could it be?”

I knew from the moment I laid eyes on her that she was nothing but trouble. I could see right through her, you know, with that sly smile of hers and her beady little eyes. I knew she was up to something.”

I massaged my temple, feeling a headache coming on as I knew too well that Rose was about to start her drama.

“Ziva has never had a sly smile on her face,” I said, trying to reason with her. “You’re just overthinking it.” But she shook her head quickly as if she knew Ziva better than I did.

“I know more about witches than anyone here,” Rose said, her voice taking on a stubborn tone.

She continued, “She always has this sly smile that appears on her lips when you’re not looking. It’s like she is preparing to do something harmful that you don’t know, and she’s just waiting for the right moment to do it.”

I narrowed my eyes, knowing where this conversation would lead to.

Slowly, I could feel my temper rising, but I tried to stay calm. Gently, I took Rose by the arm and guided her to a chair.

“Alright, mate,” I said, trying to sound reassuring. “You need to sit and relax.”

Rose shook her head quickly, “I know you will try to stop me from voicing out my thoughts about that witch. But I won’t let you.”