

Chapter 113

Ava had opted for a quick shower instead of the inviting bath the Omegas had run for her because she was starving but felt too filthy to eat. Once she rested, she hoped she would finally get a chance to soak and relax. She had longed for a chance to do that since the first day she had been in Zeke's room. She walked into the dining room in record time and sat at the table, her mouth watering at the spread in front of her. Was this all for her?

Samantha and Julie stood at the side of their room with their eyes lowered, even though no one else was there. Zeke seemed to have disappeared, instantly deflating her mood and reminding her of reality. Her imaginary Zeke and the real one were not the same person, but seeing him as she came out of Isolation had felt like a natural continuation of her time at the imaginary beach.

“This looks very delicious” she said to the Omegas.

“Thank you,” Samantha said.

“You've made enough to feed an army. Why don't you sit down and eat, too,” Ava suggested. “It's your day off, and though I'm grateful you cooked, I feel bad that you must have been working for hours.”

“I... the rules,” Julie said.

“Are you going to report yourselves?”

“Well... no,” Samantha said.

“Then sit down, ladies. Let’s eat.”

The two wolves hesitated briefly before walking to the table and sitting at the end furthest from her. They looked uncomfortable as hell, but at least this was a start. The academy had enough rules to keep them on their toes while they were out on campus grounds, but everyone was supposed to be able to relax in their own house.

It was something she had come to appreciate since moving out of the dorms. It was safe there with Zeke, even though she always had to look over her shoulder when she stepped out of the front door.

It was funny how the Omegas’ attitudes had changed. They had already been in this house when she was brought there, so they had known from the beginning of her complicated relationship with Zeke. They had still been bold enough to call her a whore when they had been changing the bedding, so she knew they were not afraid of her.

But they had been acting oddly lately.

Even as they sat at the same table, they still hadn’t looked her in the eye even once.

Derek and Myles walked in at that moment and took a second to appreciate the food on the table before the Omegas caught their attention. Both ladies stiffened like they were waiting to be punished. What sort of place taught people that they could be punished for sitting down to eat?

“Morning, ladies,” Derek said, continuing to his seat.

“This smells amazing,” Myles said.

They said nothing about the Omegas as they smiled at her. And that felt the strangest of all. Though these wolves had taken care of her after Zeke rescued her from the forest, there had never been any of this warmth on their faces. Myles, especially, had been cold and suspicious from the beginning, but he smiled easily now as he pushed a huge platter of bacon towards her.

“Ladies first,” he said.

She helped herself and then watched him offer the Omegas the platter next.

“I... we... we can serve you first,” Julie said, clearly shocked.

“It’s best if you have some before Myles starts eating,” Derek snorted, after which both of them started to pile food onto her plate first and then the Omegas before serving themselves.

She was starving, so she didn’t think much about it as she started to eat. It was funny, but she hadn’t felt hunger while in Isolation. Two days of

no food. How did the academy get away with any of that? It was almost as if she had been in a state of suspended animation, and all bodily needs and functions stopped while they attempted to infect her with their darkness.

“So, how are you really feeling?” Derek asked after she served herself seconds.

“Just tired. I feel like I could sleep for a week.”

“Nothing else? No pain or... anything?” Myles asked.

Before they left for the last day of evaluations, Myles asked her what she was. She couldn't deny she felt something was different after she escaped the forest, but a combination of Jared's cream and pure luck brought her this far. She still didn't want to mention Jared's name, in case that was another rule she'd broken.

“I'm fine.”

The four wolves had stopped eating and were looking at her. No, they were studying her. She felt like a specimen under a microscope.

“You know that rat Jared went in for two days last semester. He's not been the same since,” Derek said.

The moment she heard his name, she remembered what had got her into this mess in the first place. That grip Zeke's wolf had on Jared had looked deadly, and there had been a lot of blood in the ring. Was he okay? She shouldn't care about him after what he said to her, but she

couldn't help it. She wasn't heartless, and despite how things had turned out, Jared had helped her a lot.

Maybe she could check on him before she went to sleep. But she knew Zeke wouldn't like that, and she didn't feel like arguing with anyone today

"Where's Zeke?" she asked without commenting on what Derek said

Derek had probably never been to Isolation or set foot in the forest. That evil she'd felt in both places was enough to break anyone. If she hadn't been able to escape so completely in her head, there was no telling what would have happened to her.

"Just taking care of some pack business. He'll be back soon," Myles answered.

Hopefully not too soon. She had been disappointed that Zeke left so soon after her release, but now she could see it was a good thing.

Once they finished eating, she helped the Omegas clear the table even though they protested, Zeke still wasn't back by the time the kitchen was tidy, and it sounded like his wolves were watching the TV in the living room. Instead of going up the stairs, she kept her steps light and her breathing steady as she walked towards the front door and quietly opened it

When she was at the end of the driveway, and no one had followed her out, she turned towards Jared's house and started jogging. She didn't know why she was doing it. Jared had his pack to take care of him, and

it was none of his business. It had been two days, so he had to be alright by now, But she jogged anyway until she was at his front door and ringing his bell. She would just see him and head back. No one would even know she had left the house.

Five minutes later, she was ready to head back. Either the house was empty, or Jared was ignoring her. As an Alpha, he would have known she was coming.

She sighed and turned away from the door to walk down the steps. It was for the best, anyway. This had been the second time she had seen Zeke attack him; a third time might not end well for anyone.

The front door cracked open before she reached the bottom. She turned back to speak, but her eyes widened, and her breath caught in her throat when she saw the wolf standing in the doorway.

What the hell happened?