

Chapter 42: Secrets Spilled

Amelia let go of Gabriel. He shot a dirty look at Jonathan and clenched his fists.

Who the hell did this human think he was? Cutting in like that?

Then he looked at Amelia's face and he knew that he couldn't lose his cool.

"Before you go," he said. "I, I have something for you." Gabriel reached into his pocket and pulled out a brooch. It shone a fiery red.

"The ruby," Amelia exclaimed.

"Yes," Gabriel smiled. "I had it made into this broach. For you."

He held it out to her. It was stunning. But she couldn't accept it.

"It's too precious, Gabriel," she said, shaking her head. "It belongs to the pack."

"It's no use to the pack right now. I insist. Take it." He thrust it forward again for emphasis.

"I don't understand."

What did he mean 'it's of no use'?

"The ruby will only light up once for one generation of Alpha. It lit up for you."

Amelia felt a strong pull in her heart. "I see," she said, unable to hide the sadness in her voice.

"Even if I marry a new Luna. The ruby will never light up for me again. I should have – I should have seen it sooner. I was so blind. I regret it. But that's for me to live with, not you. It's too painful – this ruby. You should have it. It shone for you. At least keep it for now? You can give it back one day, when I have an heir. Then it can come back to our pack and be a gift from the elders."

Amelia's heart hurt. It physically hurt. It hurt in a way she didn't even know a heart could hurt. He'd put her through so much. So much pain. She was speechless.

"Amelia?" he said in a raspy voice. "I know what I lost. Please, just accept my apology. Take the ruby. Your wolf is injured. The ruby can help draw out the poison. Remember? At the very least, take it to heal."

Tears brimmed in Amelia's eyes, but before she could respond, he was pinning the broach onto her dress. Jonathan watched the whole scene, silently. It was the first time he truly saw the significance of the past Amelia and Gabriel shared.

Gabriel didn't say another word. He kissed her hand and then backed away slowly.

Amelia took a deep breath and shook her head. "You wanted to tell me something?" she asked, refocusing her attention towards Jonathan.

He nodded and led her through the crowd, outside, where the cool, crisp night air provided a gentle respite from the stuffiness inside.

They found a bench overlooking the lake. The music was faint in the background, as were the sounds of crickets in the forest.

Amelia looked up at the moon. It was stunning. There was something strange about Jonathan today. She'd had a nagging feeling. She couldn't shake it. With her eyes still fixed on the moon, she asked:

"Are you a werewolf?"

He took a quick, short breath and then answered.

"Yes."

And now it all made sense. He lifted his head to the moon, too.

"But how? I've never smelled wolf on you before."

"My wolf," he responded as they both stared at the moon. "Something is wrong."

Amelia nodded. She didn't know how she felt. He'd kept this a secret, but why?

"And Sephora?" she asked, turning to look at him. "Did you convince Sephora to take the deal?"

Jonathan sighed again but didn't make eye contact. Amelia watched the profile of his face. "I, I just helped. I wanted to help you and the company. Gabriel helped too. He promised Mandrake, he made a deal with Sephora that – well, that he would use Stormfang to give Mandrake a waiver of all logistics fees for ten years. And that he'd upgrade to the highest priority on all of Mandrake's foreign trade orders."

Amelia appreciated the truth, finally, from Jonathan. Her mind went to Gabriel. He really did care about his pack and his people. He'd always been so hands on, helping his pack find good jobs, better jobs, so they could have a better life. She'd been so angry with Gabriel that she'd overlooked some of his good qualities. In fact, she'd rarely seen him when she was Luna, except at Sophia's place. She'd begrudged him his time away, but looking back on it now, he'd always been busy outside the pack, with work.

"We don't have much to offer, do we, us werewolves?" Amelia pondered out loud.

"How do you mean?" Jonathan asked.

"In terms of capitalization. We're more physically fit than humans. That's our best offering. You know, when Gabriel first formed the logistics company, he used to actually work alongside the workers. He had an accident once. A young

wolf made a mistake while loading a large piece of machinery. Gabriel stepped in and was smashed in the process.”

“He saved the young wolf, though?” Jonathan asked.

“Yeah. His mom was furious with him. But I think it was more about not being able to help him, physically, with his work. You know? Like all she could do was chores when he was out putting himself in physical risk. All just so he could build a business in the human world.”

“He succeeded,” Jonathan mused. “His business. It’s successful.”

“It is.”

Amelia thought about the deal with Mandrake. Based on what she’d heard, she wasn’t confident that Mandrake was actually going to help her that much.

Just then, Olivia ran up to them, her cheeks flushed with excitement.

“There you are! I’ve been looking for you everywhere!” she exclaimed. Then she eyed the two of them suspiciously. “What are you doing out here? Aloooooone?”

“Nothing,” Amelia snapped.

“Just talking,” Jonathan quipped.

“Right. Well. Just thought you might want to know that WE

WON!" Olivia yelled.

"What?" Amelia stood up.

"They just announced it. We did, Mila! We actually did it. And you should have seen the look on Amaya's face."

"That'll shut her up!" Jonathan laughed.

"Ya think? No more cocky Miss Amaya! You know, I think that might be the best part about winning," Olivia mused.

"I can't believe it." Amelia was in shock.

"The organizers are looking for you. They need you to confirm. Then they'll get all the official documents ready for you to sign tomorrow morning.


"Excellent!" Olivia turned to go back in but then noticed she wasn't being followed. "Helloooo. Kind of a big deal inside. Waiting for you!" She motioned for them to come.

But Jonathan had a look in his eyes. Amelia knew his well enough to know that he still had something to tell her.

"You know what? Go on in without us. Tell them I'll just be a moment," Amelia instructed Olivia. Olivia was about to protest when Amelia gave her the 'just give me a second' eyes. Olivia nodded and headed back inside.

"Is there something else, Jonathan? Something else you need to tell me?"

His head was down and his hands were in his pocket.

 +20 BONUS

Amelia had no idea why, but she was suddenly filled with a sense of dread. He looked up at her then, his face riddled with guilt.

"What – what is it?" Amelia's mind spun to terrible things.

"Just one more thing to tell you," he shrugged.

"Fire away," Amelia replied, guarded. What could be so bad that warranted that look on his face?

"Well - I'm getting married."

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