

#Chapter 24: A Beta-Sized Problem

It's the weekend and anybody who is anybody in the pack is at the house. That means Dana is here too. Every time I catch a whiff of her scent, my body goes on alert and it's making my muscles sore. It's only nine in the morning and I'm already tired.

At the breakfast table, Dana insisted on sitting next to me. I had to work hard to keep my hackles from rising. My place in this pack was tenuous at best and I was still some nobody. I would never beat a beta, especially one from such a powerful pack. I had to make sure I didn't issue a challenge by accident.

I was bringing my fork to my mouth when Dana jostled my arm, causing me to drop the fork into my lap, ruining the sundress I was wearing.

"I'm so sorry, Almara. How clumsy of me! Why don't you go to the bathroom real quick and wash out that stain?" Dana said nicely enough, but I could see a glimmer of satisfaction behind her eyes. She had done it on purpose.

"It's okay," I told her and hurried off to the bathroom, but trying to wash it out proved useless. I'd have to change after breakfast.

When I got back to the table, I went to sit down, but suddenly the chair was no longer there. I fell to the ground

hard, the pain running down my legs.

Let me out. I'll tear that bitch to pieces, Lily growled and I shushed her. There wasn't much we could do. Especially when the stunts that Dana was pulling were so childish. And it's not like I could actually prove any of this.

"Almara, are you okay?" Arthur asked, rushing over and kneeling down. He brushed a hand over my face, trailing it down my arm, running it down my leg. Goosebumps flared over my skin and I couldn't contain a shiver.

Arthur's lips twitched in that familiar smirk and his eyes heated with desire. He put one arm around my back and one under my knees, picking me up as he stood. I caught a glimpse of Dana's face and while she had schooled her features into that of mild concern, the storm cloud above her head was a deep green.

"I'm sorry, but it seems like I need to tend to my fiancé," Arthur apologized, but by the way he said 'tend,' everyone knew he meant something else. The hoots coming from the far end of the table confirmed it.

I squirmed in his arms, uncomfortable with the attention. Arthur grinned down at me. A pale pink that was almost white weaved its way through the darker pinks of lust. Affection. That was genuine affection that he was feeling. It was small, but it made my heart triple its normal rhythm.

"Alpha Arthur, I think you're forgetting your meeting with

Alpha Braxton," Dana chimed in and Arthur glared at her. She didn't seem phased by it. I'm sure she was used to it by now.

Still, the meeting must have been important because Arthur put me down. "I'm sorry, little wolf. When I'm free, maybe I'll take you down to the spa. I know how much you enjoyed the wet sauna last night."

My face burned with embarrassment. He knew. He knew what I had done to myself last night. How did he know? Did he have eyes and ears all over the place?

He's an alpha. Of course he does, Lily muttered, still angry with Dana. And probably angry about not getting any alone time with Arthur too. [1](#)

As Arthur and Dana walked off side by side, I went to the bedroom to change out of the ruined dress. I was still feeling a little fevered from being close to Arthur so I decided that a cold shower was in order.

I slipped into the cool water and just stood there with my eyes closed, trying not to imagine what would have happened if Arthur hadn't gone to that meeting. Suddenly the water went from cool to burning. I cried out, moving out from under the shower head.

Red welts appeared on the skin that had gotten burned. Steam rose from the water. How the hell did that happen?

I inched around the shower, hugging the walls to avoid

getting sprayed until I could turn the water off without hurting myself again. Opening the shower door, I was hit with the faint smell of Dana's scent. How had she gotten in here? Wasn't she with Arthur? How had I not noticed her?

She's definitely getting bolder. That little display at the dining room only fanned her jealousy, Lily told me and I wrapped my arms around myself. She was going to be here for the whole weekend. As the alpha's fiance, I couldn't just hide away in my room. The pack would expect me to mingle with them. 1

What am I supposed to do? I can't just tell Arthur without proof, I said and even as I thought it, the red welts were already disappearing. Wolves healed at a much faster rate than humans. By the time I left the bathroom, they'd be gone all together.

It might come down to a challenge, Lily warned and I grimaced. I wasn't strong enough to beat her. I would fail in front of the entire pack and prove to everyone that I wasn't meant to be there Luna. Not that I would be anyway.

I shook my head. I would just have to be more careful. I would try and stay as far away from Dana as I possibly could.

For the next few hours, I ducked and weaved behind the assorted pots and statues that lined the hallways if I even caught a whiff of her scent. And it seemed to be working. It also helped that Arthur was in meetings all day and as his beta, Dana had to be in some of them too.

I was coming downstairs after visiting a little cafe that one of Arthur's staff had led me to when they'd found me looking for coffee. I didn't have any kind of warning before something shoved me from behind.

Lily made us shift while we were mid-air since we'd be able to take the brunt of the fall better in wolf form. I rolled down the steps a little before managing to dig my claws into the rug, catching myself from down any further.

I looked up, but no one was there. It didn't matter though. Only one person had been picking on me all day.

That could have killed us, Lily snarled, pawing at the ground and whining. I hadn't ever seen her this upset. Of course, nobody had ever threatened our lives before either.

This is getting a little out of hand. I think I should tell Arthur, even without proof, I told her as I lope off toward the bedroom for the second time. I couldn't shift back out here in the open. I didn't want anyone to see me naked.

Let's pray to the Moon Goddess that he believes you, Lily said, but she didn't sound hopeful. To be honest, neither was I. Why would Arthur believe me, someone he's known for less than a month, over his beta?