

Chapter 137

Later that afternoon, an emergency council meeting commenced.

The council was gathered in a circle, their faces etched with a mix of disbelief and curiosity. Each of them sought answers to the astounding occurrence that was the events that had unfolded the night before.

"What transpired last night, Alpha Caleb?" Elder Lawson inquires. "How did the pack manage to escape Cedric's rampage?"

Caleb sits at the head of the council, his countenance a mask of apparent puzzlement. "I wish I knew," he responds, feigned bewilderment lacing his words. "The events of last night remain a mystery to me as well."

Elder Margaret, her aged eyes scrutinizing Caleb's every word, leaned forward. "Do you mean to say that you have no knowledge of what happened either, Alpha Caleb?" Her voice held a trace of suspicion.

Caleb maintains his front of innocence, his expression carefully neutral. "I can assure you, esteemed elders, I was just as surprised as every one of you to find the pack completely unharmed this morning. I'm ashamed to admit it, but, despite every one of our attempts at keeping him contained, Cedric's wolf had made a habit of wrecking havoc to some level every other night, but last night was a strange anomaly. It was weirdly calm, as I'm sure you all noticed."

The elders exchanged skeptical glances. Their doubts were evident as they deliberated on the unusual turn of events. The sudden cessation of the usual chaos bore an air of the inexplicable, leaving the council puzzled and wary.

Elder Thomas, his brow furrowed with concern, spoke up next. "Could it be that the witches are plotting something else? It could also be another enemy at play here. Are we to expect a more dire consequence?"

Caleb shakes his head, his words carefully selected. "I can't rule out any possibilities, but as far as I know, there's been no external threat reported." He pauses, masking his inner turmoil behind a composed facade. "It seems more like an anomaly, a night of respite, one we haven't experienced in a long time."

"Could this be a sign of change? A shift in the tide of Cedric's affliction, maybe?" The query hangs in the air, heavy with implications that resonate with the collective hope of the pack.

Caleb releases a loud exhale, refraining from running a frustrated hand through his hair. This was one of the reasons he was certain he wasn't cut out for a life of controlled leadership. Having to answer the council and explain his plans, let them in on whatever potential decision he would take and also seek their input.

It wasn't something he could deal with for more than a few hours at most without going crazy. The rest of his life was out of the question. This can't go on forever. Shutting his eyes to regain a sense of control before he stirs toward overstimulation, he purses his lips. "We can only speculate. Whatever happened last night may hold the key to understanding Cedric's curse, but for now, it remains elusive."

The council deliberates further, discussing various theories and conjectures with no definitive conclusion. The atmosphere remained thick with uncertainty as more voices of apprehension took the stage.

"I can't believe this sudden calm is just a stroke of luck. There's something more sinister brewing. Mark my words." Elder Harris, known for his outspoken nature, voices his skepticism openly.

The council room immediately resumed buzzing with a mixture of skepticism, concern, and dissenting opinions.

"Yes, this tranquility may be a deceptive calm before a storm. We would know, we experienced such a calm before these perilous times," another elder warns, his voice carrying a sense of urgency. "We can not dismiss the possibility that this is a prelude to a more severe threat."

"We need assurance that we're not facing a more potent threat." Someone else adds in.

"I understand your concerns, and I share them. However, rushing to make hasty decisions might lead us astray. I suggest we monitor the situation closely before taking any drastic measures. Meanwhile, we'll remain vigilant and prepared for any potential threats," Caleb states.

At this point, it wouldn't be the first time Caleb had hidden things from the council. He didn't trust a lot of them. Excluding the fact that it was way too tiresome to have them involved in every single decision, he strongly believed that the witch also had spies present in Redwood.

"Vigilance might not be enough, Alpha Caleb. We need to address the Cedric issue head-on. Waiting, like this, we're nothing but sitting ducks. It's a proven fact now that there is not an atom of humanity left in your brother. We're all suffering as a result of your hesitance, too. I suggest you put him down once and for all, so the pack can have some definitive peace."

The council room erupts into a heated debate with that, some elders supporting Elder Harris' suggestion, calling loudly for immediate action against Cedric's beastly wolf. Others, advocating for patience, cautioned against hasty decisions.

Amidst the clamor, another elder's loud voice is heard. "Alpha Caleb, what are your intentions concerning the outsider?" There was an immediate pause. It had successfully caught the attention of all the others, diverting their focus.

"That's true," Lawson agreed. "What plans do you have for this outsider? Her presence raises eyebrows, and we need clarity about your intentions."

Some elders murmured in agreement, while others scoffed.

Caleb, licking his lips in thought, chooses his words with practiced ease. "Marisol is here under unique circumstances. I assure you, my decisions regarding her are made with the best interests of the pack in mind."

"Some believe you plan to marry her, Alpha. Are those the 'unique circumstances' you speak of?" Margaret retorted immediately.

When Caleb makes no attempt to counter the claims, another elder adds, "Or, is it not true that you aim to marry her in order to secure a political alliance for your reign?"

Caleb's silence fuels further speculation among the elders. Some nod in agreement while others dismiss it as baseless conjecture.

"Two mates? Do you want to drive him crazy?" Someone says in a hushed whisper.

"But having the daughter of the Dark Moon as a Luna would be phenomenal. She's a special breed, I heard."

Caleb chews on his lip, feeling caught between a rock and a hard place. He needed to act fast, give them something else to talk about, or risk their heightening suspicions and the possibility of having his true intentions exposed.

"Let's not jump to such conclusions just yet. Alpha Caleb has guided us through difficult times. Perhaps Marisol's presence holds a significance we've yet to understand." Thomas chips in.

"Yes," Margaret agreed. "We should trust his judgment and give him the time needed to address these concerns."

Caleb sucks in a breath with a subtle shake of his head. He could never get used to his position. He hated everything about it.

The council continued to deliberate, voices rising and falling like a tumultuous tide. Caleb, caught amid conflicting opinions, maintains a stoic expression. He recognizes that the decisions to be made in the coming days would shape the fate of the Redwood Pack.

As the meeting progressed, the council remained divided, reflecting the complex web of challenges, uncertainties, and conflicting beliefs within the pack.

The council meeting concludes with an air of unresolved tension. The elders dispersed with their disparate opinions echoing within the chamber.