

CHAPTER 6

Three days had passed since Amelia was caught and her grand plan exposed. Tommy was finally free of her. He passed by Alpha Rhey's office to discuss about his replacement because he couldn't bear seeing her daily. Having his mate near and yet so far was harder than he had thought was possible and he couldn't keep doing it anymore.

He knew as an Alpha, Rhey would protest against losing her Beta, but he didn't think she would make it a big deal.

"You can't leave," she bellowed after he had finished explaining his wishes.

"Rhey..." Tommy began hesitantly,

"As your Alpha I forbid it!" Rhey cut in harshly, "you can never come back again if you do." Tommy's eyes widened. Did she just threaten to declare him a rogue?

Rhey sighed with a frown watching her mate glare at her like he couldn't stand her mere sight. It hurt and she knew it wasn't fair to use her title on him but it was the only way she could get him to stay. She wanted him to stay. More than ever she was sure of her feelings for him. She wanted him with every cell in her body and she wasn't ready to lose him.

"Stay," she rasped lowly. Tommy kept silent. "Please," She begged earnestly.

Tommy swallowed hard and narrowed his eyes.

"Why?" He ran his fingers aggressively through his hair with a deep exhale. "Haven't you done enough?"

Rhey shifted nervously regretting her decision to mask her phenomenons for the umpteenth time. "I am sorry," she murmured not meeting his scorching gaze.

"You are not forgiven," Tommy shot back aggressively. "What you did can't be forgiven," he finished dryly.

"I love you," Rhey blurted desperately surprising herself more than Tommy. Not even in her wildest dreams did she see herself confessing her love for him. But it felt good nonetheless.

Tommy chuckled sourly, "you will say just anything to keep me here, won't you?" His scowl deepened as he regarded her suspiciously. He wanted so bad to believe her but she had proven unworthy of his trust. And he was no fool to be charred twice.

"I do love you, Thomas, and I think you know it too."

Tommy felt the sincerity in her words and wanted nothing more than to grab and kiss her mercilessly. But just remembering how unfair she had been to him for years deadened his excitement. He loosely folded his arms over the chest and exhaled.

"I will stay," he admitted making Rhey sigh with relief. And he saw it.

"Don't atter yourself," he growled, "I am not staying for you." Rhey's eyes blinked suspiciously but she said nothing. Her pride wouldn't let her beg any further.

Tommy felt his wolf calling to him to comfort their mate but he shut him out. She didn't deserve any affection from him, Tommy convinced himself.

"If it doesn't involve pack matters, I would rather not see your face." He added intending to hurt her and he succeeded but he didn't enjoy the satisfaction cause her pain instantly transferred as their pain.

Before Rhey could get a word out, Logan barged in, "we have a problem."

Behind him, Michael followed looking just as troubled.

"What is it?" Rhey asked seriously in alarm slipping into the Alpha mode.

"Rogues were sighted on the western border," Logan informed pacing relentlessly. He more than anyone hated rogues.

"Remember what we talked about," she referred to the emergency meeting they had after they were done interrogating Amelia. "Gather the crisis squad," She began dishing out orders.

"And leave one team for me," she finished calmly after delegating crucial tasks to her uncles.

Logan nodded wildly already pumped. As werewolves violence is a part of who they are. And he wanted revenge, for what had been done to his family in the past. After a little bit more consultation, Michael and Logan took off leaving Tommy alone with Rhey once again.

She turned to her mate with a sigh, "I need you here."

"Okay,"

"Take all the warriors you need and secure the parameters." She instructed firmly, "make sure all the civilians get to the safe room."

Tommy agreed with a polite 'yes Alpha,' and left to do as authorized. All their earlier tension was forgotten. Someone was out to harm their pack and everything else seemed trivial compared.

Thanks to Logan's vicious interrogation the day before, they knew the kind of brutality to expect from the 'bad man,' who turned out to be Jonathan's bastard son, Arthur.

Apparently, he and Amelia had been amassing an army of rogues, who they used to subdue the Ankora pack.

Alpha Rhey's instructions to the squads heading out were to kill on sight. She and her family were once at the receiving end of Jonathan's cruelty and if his son was anything remotely like him, she knew they needed to be extra cautious.

Though Tommy wasn't pleased with the idea of his mate running towards danger, he knew she was a kickass Alpha. He pitied whoever will suffer her wrath.

Michael's squad had a clear route so they were the first to return, only to find out some intruders had somehow gotten past their defenses unnoticed.

Luckily Tommy and his team took out most and captured the rest alive for interrogation purposes.

Logan on the other hand wasn't so lucky. His team walked straight to an ambush, and though they fought diligently, he lost seven men to the rogues. The few survivors sustained a substantial amount of injuries including Logan.

Michael felt it, he felt the exact moment when a claw was stuck through his mate's chest. His breath labored as his heart pounded wildly. He tried to reach him through their mind link to no avail. Without hesitating he took off in the direction of his mate's scent. Half of his team members followed while others stayed with Tommy ready for whoever got past the parameters.

Michael's howl was heard all over the land when his eyes fell on his bleeding mate. He rushed pushing everyone out of the way and knelt next to Logan.

"Baby," he whispered grabbing Logan's face in his hands. He gently pushed his hair off his face and stared at the man he loved. Logan's whimper steered Michael's gaze to his chest.

"F**k," he cursed trying to put pressure on the wound with his bare hands but Logan wasn't healing like he was supposed to. In fact, he was losing a lot of blood. "Stay with me, baby." He begged when his lover's hazel eyes began uttering.

"Here," Michael heard one of his warriors say and lifted his gaze. A Cicakurai herb which was widely used to slow down the bleeding and prevent bacteria infections was thrust into his hand. He hastily crushed the leaves in his hands and began covering the deep wound as he muttered his pleas to an almost unconscious Logan.

"Please stay with me..." he begged tears falling down his handsome face.

On the other hand, Tommy was restless. Seeing pack doctors rushing to retrieve an injured Logan red up his protective side. His wolf was howling in his head urging him to go and look for their mate, but he knew leaving his post would seem disrespectful to the Alpha queen, who also happened to be his mate.

He had no other option than to stay put and wait. "Please be safe," he muttered to himself pacing around as he rubbed his palms erratically.

"What if she hurt?" His wolf asked apprehensively trying to rile him up hoping he would go to their mate.

'She is not,' he shot back but he didn't sound confident and his wolf noted. He was quick to shut him off because listening to his wolf whine about Rhey's safety, only made him want to go to her and damn the consequences.

"She is safe," Tommy turned to face Julian, the head warrior who also happened to be their friend. The three of them grew up together and though Julian was a few years younger, their friendship was solid.

"I know," Tommy answered his friend but the slight tremor in his voice betrayed his feelings. Julian stepped closer and draped his arm over Tommy's shoulder,

"If you want I can go to check up on her,"

"Really?" Tommy asked enthusiastically and Julian nodded with a smile. "Just say the word,"

Tommy had told Julian about the fact that Rhey was his mate. He was shocked at first but after Tommy explained everything Julian understood.

Just as he was about to let Julian go make sure she was okay he saw her squad approaching from the west. Then he smelled her blood.

Before he could stop himself Tommy sprinted following her scent. His heart was pounding hard in his chest worriedly. His strides halted when he saw her. She was covered in blood.

Rhey felt his presence before she saw him. Her eyes found him and for a second the world stopped. She rushed towards him as he rushed to her. They stopped just a few meters away from each other. Tommy scanned her thoroughly trying to figure out if she was hurt. His wolf wanted to make sure their mate was okay and so did he.

"Thomas..." Rhey began breathlessly but Tommy cut her off by snatching her roughly and hugged her to his chest tightly. She circled her hands around his waist and buried her face in his chest inhaling him deeply. Tommy caressed her back soothingly with a relieved sigh. She was safe, his mate was safe and that's all that mattered.

"I am okay," Rhey tried to assure him because she could feel his emotions. Ever since she marked her he couldn't conceal his feelings around her. She reached her head and caressed back to have a good look at his face. "I am safe," she whispered raising her hand to step his cheek. Tommy lowered his head and their foreheads bumped. They stayed like that for a minute or so simply breathing each other in silence.

"Can we talk?" Rhey broke the quiet. Tommy swallowed hard knowing very well what she wanted to talk about but he was not ready. He didn't know if he will ever be ready to talk about her deception.

"No," Tommy rasped taking an instinctive step back. He saw a quick flash of hurt in Rhey's face but ignored it, turned quickly, and left.

Alpha queen Rhey was left staring at his retreating back wondering if she will ever get her mate back. She didn't have to wonder for so long...

"You did a number on him," She heard the unmistakable voice accuse and she sighed not daring to face him.

"He told you," she surmised.

"I am offended you didn't," Julian countered stepping in front of her. Rhey exhaled deeply and stepped forward laying her head on Julian's shoulder.

"I messed up, didn't I?"

"You so did," Julian admitted. "Now I can't help but wonder if my mate is somewhere close just hiding in plain sight."

Julian's words made Rhey inch. He was already twenty-one and he was yet to find his mate. She hadn't realized how her selfish act affected the people she loved until now.

"s**t," she cursed with a broken whisper. Just as Julian was about to speak they heard a commotion behind them. They turned, "Alpha," one of the warriors murmured with a slight bow. All the blood drained out of Rhey's body after hearing the message...