

Owned by the Alphas 2: Claimed by the Alphas |

The Price

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LORELAI

I had a restless sleep. I couldn't close my eyes without thinking about the vampires and Adrenna breaking in while I was sleeping and taking the twins.

I sat up, my head against the headboard as I looked out the open doors at the night that was a constant thing at the moment.

The twins were asleep, I could feel that, my shadows checking in on them every few seconds, but it made me nervous being away from them.

Mom had reassured me that it was normal, but I couldn't shake the feeling.

"Sleep, Little Luna. You're going to need it," Kai said, his eyes still closed next to me, his hand on my stomach, rubbing it tenderly.

"I'm still adjusting," I said, and he smiled in his half-sleep.

"You've got an entire childhood to stress about them, probably adulthood too. Let tonight be the night you don't."

"If only it were that easy," I murmured back, running my hand through his hair, playing with the dark strands.

"We clearly didn't tire you out enough." He chuckled, peering up at me.

I looked down at him, leaning to kiss the top of his head. "I am tired, just...have a feeling. I need to go check on them," I said, then climbed over him and out of bed.

That woke Brax up straightaway, his hand going to the empty spot I had been in.

Derik was awake; he was on watch but not in the room.

He had been working with the pack to fortify the city and get the humans settled safely in. But he had always done that in his office, so he didn't keep us awake.

I reached out to him, smiling when I found him in the bar. He was having a drink, grinning as the wolves patted him on the back, offering congratulations with rounds.

He had his work with him at the booth he had taken up, but he was happy, and that spread through me.

I had been waiting for that feeling, the one that reminded me we had everything we needed, everything we had asked for, but it was still lingering in the back of my mind that everything came with a price.

What if we hadn't paid it?

I pulled on a gown then opened the door.

"Where are you going, Spitfire?" Brax asked, sitting up and raking a hand through his long blond strands.

"To check on Zale and Enzi," I said, my body tugging me that way.

"Bring them back here to sleep so you can get some," Kai said.

I nodded. That sounded way better than having them in a separate room.

I went into the nursery, smiling as I went to the bassinets, seeing both of them sleeping soundly. I thought seeing them both there, safe, would help comfort my racing heart, but it didn't. I couldn't leave them.

I picked up Enzi first. She curled into me, sighing, little bubbles on her lips before she fell back into her deep sleep. I smiled and walked her back to Kai and Brax.

Brax was back snoring; he was as attached to sleep as I usually was, but Kai was up, smiling as he held his arms out. I put Enzi in his hold, then kissed her on her soft forehead.

"I'll go get your brother," I whispered, then left the room again.

The corridor was cold. The dark night of winter kept the flames on the wall torches constantly needing relighting, but at least they offered a bit of warmth.

I shivered as I went back to the nursery, going to get Zale.

But he wasn't there.

My heart stopped, panic rising in my throat, my chest closing in as instant tears sprung to my eyes.

"Zale?" I said out loud, despite knowing it wouldn't do a thing. I looked around the room, my eyes darting, my mind racing.

I ran to the doorway, looking up and down the corridor for anyone, my mom or Galen or even Cain, who might have just taken him for a walk so his fussing didn't wake me, but there was no one.

Pure rage woke in me, and I ran back to his bassinet, checking it one last time to make sure I wasn't going crazy. I wasn't.

My throat grew tight until I couldn't breathe a second before it ripped open with a howl so damn feral it saturated the link, alerting the pack.

My eyes burned, my canines dropped, my claws came out as my shadows poured out of me. They searched every part of the room as Kai and Brax stormed in.

"What happened?" Kai demanded, handing over Enzi to Brax.

"He's gone. Zale is gone," I snarled, shoving past them and heading down the corridor.

I was going to find him, and I didn't care who I had to tear through, interrogate, or kill to do it.

I reached out my magic, my shadows, the black and purple pouring over every part of the corridors as it searched for him, but there was nothing there. I couldn't feel him.

"*Find my son,*" I ordered down the pack link in a deep voice that I didn't know I had.

It had the weight it needed because the pack listened immediately.

Every single one of them sent their obedience to the link, their determination as raw as my own as Derik made his way to me with urgent strides.

Kai shifted into his wolf with a growl before racing through the rooms, breaking doors, sniffing and howling as he searched everything for a scent.

My white hair whipped around me as my magic grew darker, harsher. My heart was crumbling, panic was chewing at it, and I couldn't stop it.

I needed Zale, I needed him back. I had known something was going to happen, I had known it didn't feel right. It was my fault he was gone. I had to get him back.

Enzi started wailing then in Brax's hands, and he shushed her, his own eyes going white.

"Mate. They are connected," he said, and I looked back over my shoulder to them.

"She can sense her brother?" I asked, and he nodded.

"Feel her. You might be able to sense more. Touch her shadows with yours, gently. Don't overwhelm her. She's human," he warned, and I nodded, trying to calm down enough to risk it.

I was about to touch her when Derik ran over to us, his eyes filled with tears. Kai came up, his wolf form taking up the entire corridor.

"Your brother, Lorelai. Your brother is gone from the dungeons. He broke out, knocked out the guard. Adrenna helped him. They have Zale," Derik breathed through a shaky voice, and I clenched my jaw.

Witch or not, I was going after them. I turned to my daughter, fussing and wriggling in Brax's hold. Her hand was out, and I gripped it, running my finger over the soft pad of her palm.

"Tell me where he is, sweetheart," I whispered to her, then brushed my shadows against her, letting them seep inside to find hers.

As soon as they touched, I sucked in a breath, an image popping into my head.

It was the same one that had been haunting me since I had touched the border.

Silas, standing in my village surrounded by dead bodies, blood, and carnage everywhere as he smirked at me.

But this time was worse because I could feel the emptiness inside me knowing my mates were dead. Tears fell from my eyes as my chest tightened, trying to hold my heart together.

Silas looked directly at me as I stood in the snow, the darkness of night still making him a shadow in the burning flames of my village.

His smirk pulled up, and he stepped out of the shadows, his hand resting on the shoulders of a little boy. With white eyes.

“No,” I breathed, choking on the pure fear that gripped me. “Zale,” I gasped out, holding my stomach, but the boy said nothing, blood dripping down his chin, his canines out.

He licked his fingers before looking back up at Silas. “Her too?” he asked the monster, and Silas smirked, nodding once.

“Her too.”

And then Zale ran at me, bursting into a wolf, shadows pouring from his body as he fell on me.

I ripped myself away from the vision, falling back as Derik caught me.

“Lorelai? What happened?” Derik asked, but I shook my head, trying to get rid of the images before taking a deep breath.

I didn’t have time to shut down or freak out. I had to get Zale away from them; I couldn’t let him become that.

“Take a minute, Spitfire. The future is not set. It’s based on decisions that could be made.”

I snapped my head to Brax. “I am not letting my son be the one manipulated into those decisions. I’m getting him back now.

“I don’t care if the wolves are ready or not, or about the rules of attacking first. They have messed with the wrong hybrid,” I snarled before closing my eyes and stepping back.

I wasn’t sure what I was doing, but I had felt Cain’s link with Tabby before when he took me there, and I had been connected with border magic for long enough to know how to use it.

So I did.

I tugged on my end of the magic, letting everything fall away from the world around me.

I blocked out the sounds, the feelings, the links and focused on the magic, on my shadows that I knew would reach for Zale’s.

I used the hint of Enzi’s that I still felt, then pushed it out, looking for him.

My eyes flung open at the same time I connected with him.

He was looking up at my brother. He was confused; he recognized my brother’s voice, so he didn’t know if he was in the wrong hands or not, but he didn’t like how he felt.

I soothed his racing heart inside him, my shadows stretching to keep connected. It was farther than I’d ever stretched them, farther than I’d ever dared, but the magic helped.

His shadows latched on mine, and I tried not to make him upset, using his eyes to see everything around where they were.

It was a forest, but that was what made up most of our realm, so that was unsurprising. Then I saw cliffs above the forest line, the outline in the shadows.

“Good boy, baby vamp. Didn’t think you had the guts to do it, to be honest. Stealing your own nephew? That’s cold.” Adrenna giggled in her high-pitched voice from next to my brother, and Zale’s heart rate spiked.

I soothed it back down. I didn’t know what his eyes looked like with me in there, and I didn’t want to draw their attention to him.

“This thing is not my nephew. He is an abomination. Just like his mother.”

I tried not to let that one hurt, but it stung like a bitch. I shoved away the pain, focusing back in on Zale. I just needed to know where they were, and then I was coming for him.

“A powerful one. The sister too. I thought Silas wanted both?”

“He did, but Lorelai took one out before I could get to her, so this will have to do.”

“Well, I guess we should be thankful you managed that then.” She laughed like she knew Silas was not going to be happy about that.

I hope he tortured my brother for it.

“It was close. My mother saw me go in the room and tried to intercept, but I dealt with her,” Lucas said darkly, and I had to hold my breath to keep calm.

“Mom.”

I sent out the word to Cain since he was the only other magic I could connect to, and I had to hope he figured it out because I wasn’t leaving Zale until I knew where they were taking him.

“You are the perfect little soldier, aren’t you? Silas mentioned that,” she said, then sighed. “It’s a shame he also mentioned that your usefulness only extended to this part of the plan.”

Before my brother could do anything more than widen his eyes, Adrenna slit his throat, snatching Zale from him.

I sucked in a breath as I saw my brother drop to the ground through Zale’s eyes.

Adrenna wrapped Lucas in her black magic, and I forced Zale’s eyes closed so he didn’t have to see what happened when that stuff attacked.

She chuckled, then wrapped Zale tighter, huffing as she kept walking.

I let Zale open his eyes then and checked the surroundings, but it was just dark sky. I think I picked up the sound of rushing water, but I couldn’t be sure.

“Let’s go meet Daddy Silas, shall we?” She hummed to Zale, looking down at him.

As soon as she did, she frowned, and I felt her stare burn into me.

“Oh, we have company, do we? Uh-uh, Mommy, can’t have you figuring everything out just yet.”

Adrenna grinned before waving her hand over Zale’s eyes, and I was shoved out of his mind. I screamed in frustration, clenching my fists before turning to my alphas.

“I’m going hunting. Are you coming?” I demanded, and all three of them wore the same lethal expression before nodding.

“Of course we are. Let’s get our son back,” Brax said, bringing Enzi over.

I pulled her into my chest, and she snuggled in.

“We need him back,” Beenie said urgently, her voice filled with fear.

My head snapped up, my eyes clashing with hers. She had a damp forehead, her hair sticking to it as she ran in, pausing with wide eyes.

“We’re going to get him.”

“No, as in you have to. They have to stay together. It’s... I can’t explain it, but you need to get them back together.

“They aren’t like you and your brother. Their shadows, they’re joined or connected or something, and it has to be fixed,” she said, clutching her stomach before dropping to her knees.

“Where’s Cain?” Kai demanded, helping her stand again, her face pale.

“He’s healing Pearl. She was drained, stuffed in a closet,” Beenie breathed.

“Lorelai, you have to get Zale and Enzi together. Whatever Silas does to one affects the other, and we can’t let him.”

I walked forward. She knew something, had seen something, and maybe she wanted to keep that a secret, but when it came to my children, I didn’t care.

I pressed my hand against her face and reached my shadows inside her to hear or see what she couldn’t say out loud.

"Lorelai, they are the balance. Joined to be light and dark. They cannot survive without the other. I've seen it," she said in my head, and I faltered back when she shoved me out before I could find what she had seen.

"You can't see what I saw. It's forbidden," she whispered, and I nodded, frowning.

"We were just leaving anyway," I said back, and she let out a sigh of relief.

Derik frowned and stepped forward then. "I want Zale back too, mate, but we have to do this properly. We need the wolves to organize patrols and protect the city while we're gone.

"We need supplies, we need a direction. We can't just run off, or we'll lose," he tried, but I shook my head.

"No we won't. I know where they're heading. All I need to know is where Silas hides his cowardly face so I can tear the flesh from his bones," I snarled.

Kai laughed darkly. "Oh, I have been waiting for this my whole life. I'll get you into the castle, Little Luna," he promised, and I grinned back at him.

"And Enzi?" Brax nodded to the sleeping baby in my arms.

"She's coming with us. She needs to be closer to her brother, and I don't have it in me to trust anyone else with her yet," I said, and they had no argument.

"So we're just going to attack the vampires?"

"No," I said, looking down at Enzi for the strength I needed. "We're going to save my son from monsters and a fate worse than death that they have planned for him.

"I don't care what stands in the way of that, I will kill it," I promised, looking up at them as my magic and shadows grew restless with the rage that polluted me, pouring straight from my heart.

Silas was my nightmare; I wouldn't let him be my son's. The balance was literally in my hands, and I knew it was going to take everything I had to get it to favor us.

But I was going to do it.

As we got ready to leave the city, to hunt down the assholes who thought they could take my heart from me without consequences, I felt the same determination in my alphas.

They were in pain, same as I, they were running on pure hatred, same as I, and I knew it was why fate had pushed me so hard, so fast.

I knew it was why I had mated with all three of them, and I knew it was why I'd had twins.

Because it was going to take every ounce of strength that had given me to save my son and the realm.

Maybe I wasn't full human, full wolf, even full witch, but I was a powerful combination of all three, and I was going to make sure Silas knew just how powerful.

I was a fucking winter born. It was winter, my territory, my months, when others were weaker, slaves to their base instincts, but me? I was sharper than ever, my claws sharper than I could dream.

I was going to really enjoy using them to separate Silas's head from his body.

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