

## Chapter 22

“Why are you here?” It wasn't like Clover to disrespect me.

She had been my good friend since my teenage years, second only to Jabari who was born to be my best friend and beta. She didn't disrespect me or disregard my orders ever and I explicitly told her to stay at the Black Valley pack after a group of men thought she looked weak and easy enough to target. She took them all down without help but she'd sustained life-threatening injuries after that.

She was the kind of woman I expected to spend the rest of my life with. The kind of woman that everyone thought would make a fine princess and a powerful queen. She was beautiful both inside and outside but she wasn't my curse breaker.

“Valens, you know I get itchy when I'm far from you.” She wrapped her hands around me.

“I didn't plan to stay long here.” Which was the truth but it had changed now. I may have to start all over from here since I'd found my mate here. It only meant this land would break my curse totally.

“How do you like this place?” She took a seat, pulling away from me.

“It's alright.” There was nothing special about this pack. Nothing drew me to it and nothing ever drew me too anywhere. I just wandered like my curse made me do.

A vengeful witch cursed me never to find my mate, to ask, seek and knock without getting whatever I wanted. My wolf without a mate turned into a wanderer. He wandered the world in search of the little omega girl. Up until I saw her eyes, I had been colorblind from the day

of my curse. The witch may have cursed me with total blindness but it only worked partially because Jabari had run a sword through her to stop her from uttering more nonsense.

‘...You and your people will die and the rest of you will wander...’

Those were her last words. Her curse against my people. No one took her seriously until the next day when war broke out, when everything she said began to manifest one after the other and colors faded from my eyes.

“Your scent changed.” Clover, the ever clever girl mused. “You can’t say you didn’t find your mate.”

“I found my mate.” I had no reason to deny my mate with my people. They would respect her and treat her as their Luna and curse breaker.

I closed my eyes with a sigh, letting my shoulders drop forward. No one else was allowed to see me like this but Clover and I had gone through a lot together. She had been born and raised as a dainty omega but being with me forced her to toughen up. Being with me forced everyone to toughen up. It was a long hundred years.

“Are you ashamed of her? Why haven’t you publicly claimed her as your Luna?” My wolf snarled at the insult.

“Never mention the word shame in the same sentence as my Luna ever again.” My wolf snarled.

“Sorry, Alpha.” She apologized at once, the wrath in my words making her stiffen. I sighed again.

When I looked at my mate, I felt she was perfect but that was a subjective stance. She was a traitor and though I found her untouched, I knew she had something going on with her first mate. Even thinking of him made my blood boil.

“She tried to poison me.” Clover stilled and then laughed.

“What awful thing did you do to your poor mate to make her hate you enough to poison you?” I shrugged. “Does she not know that you’re immortal? A little poison wouldn’t hurt you in any way.” She hadn’t known that. Most people didn’t.

No blade or claws ever penetrated my skin. Poison could not kill me. If I jumped down from a skyscraper, my legs would break, my spine would break but I would not die. I was cursed to wander the world forever. I could not die.

I answered Clover’s question with another shrug. She didn’t know I couldn’t be killed but that first betrayal already set the tone for our relationship, even before she went out to kiss her ex, after she pestered me about rejecting her.

She wanted me to reject her so she had no issues going back to her first mate. If I rejected her, I would have no reason to be upset if she turned around and mated with the first man the moon goddess gave her.

I wasn’t a fool. I didn’t expect companionship from anyone except those who bore my curse with me. I didn’t need a companion. I just needed a curse breaker. Unfortunately for her, she was stuck with me whether or not she wanted to.

She could never be with another man. Her body would not enjoy any touch besides from mine and if she even tried, I would feel it in my guts and the heavens and hell would not stop me from tearing out her partner’s head from his neck.

“She loves another.” Clover sucked in a sharp breath. She stayed quiet for a long time after that and we both basked in the silence of the room as we went deep into thought.

“Is this another manifestation of the curse?” She asked in a voice quieter than usual. It wasn’t another manifestation of the curse. This was nothing but my ill luck.

“My curse is mostly broken. You will have a chance to find your mate now.”

The many oracles and mages we contacted after my curse started to manifest assured me that once I broke my curse, my people too would be free from theirs, one after the other. They assured me I wouldn't wander the world for a long time and I held on to their words even when it felt as if their words were lies. I held them as the only hope for change in my life and after a hundred and four years, it finally happened.

I found my mate. I could see colors. The urge to wander, to leave and find a new home after conquering a pack always hit after about three months, becoming impossible to ignore after a year so I had to wait to see if that part of the curse had been broken too. I think it must have because my wolf wouldn't want to leave his mate to conquer senselessly.

I couldn't father any children with the women I was with after my curse so I added barren to my list of curses but I knew that I would have a pup with Aysel. My spirit convinced me of that.

My curse was mostly broken and once I broke it finally, my people would be free. The burden on my neck would lessen but first I had to place some of those burdens in Aysel. She had to finish what she started.

“All this while, I held out hope that we would be mated,” Clover said out of the blue. I turned to look at her. The incredulity I felt must have shown on my face because she reddened.

“It's been a hundred years.”

“I know it's stupid but I'm your lucky clover.” She poked my arm with a sad smile. I used to call her that as a joke when we were younger and I fancied her. Things changed.

“You haven't been my lucky clover for the last century. You're just Clover now.”

“A little bit of empathy would go a long way, Valens. Take this advice from a woman. We don’t want you driving away your mate before our curse is fully broken.”

“Let me worry about my mate and how I treat her.” I didn’t need any such advice as it sounded like a lecture.

She hissed something under her breath after I shut her down but she was not to be deterred as she continued.

“What’s up with the little omega that ran into me this morning?”

“What about her?”

“She has the scent of an alpha.”

“She’s my mate.” I knew I couldn’t hide forever and I had no plans to do that. She may not be worthy of being my mate but my wolf recognized her as his. After a full century of wandering restlessly, Zino finally found his rest.

“Why are you letting your mate work the kitchen?”

She had to learn. I couldn’t have a mate that got pushed about at every slight chance. I didn’t want her to be an easy target for the millions of enemies I’d gathered. She may not be worth the thought, seeing how she wanted me dead so she could be with her ex, but I couldn’t help that I cared for her.