

Chapter 28

I watched as my mate walked out of my office and it took a great deal of control to restrain my beast from keeping her glued to my side. With each day that passed, I grew less and less concerned about her past behavior.

She seemed too innocent to have tried poisoning me or betraying me. The person she seemed to be was not the same person I'd known her as and I kept trying to remind myself that she was more than met the eyes.

She'd worked her way into my life in a matter of weeks to the point where I couldn't string two thoughts together without her intruding into one of them. She occupied my mind on a daily basis. I knew it was the mate bond doing all these but no matter how much I tried to separate what was real and what was a projection by the mate bond, it became harder each day. I didn't know where my true feelings began and where the mate bond ended. It felt like everything blurred together into one.

One thing was certain. Mate bond or not, I would readily tear down anyone who thought to harm her.

I was trying to get back to my work after thoughts of my mate distracted me when Clover called.

"Valens! You have to come here!" Clover sounded desperate as she yelled at me through a loud ruckus in the background.

"What? It's quite noisy where you are." I skimmed through a particular document while Clover found a quieter place to take the call.

"It's Aysel." My eyes paused on a word.

"What about her?"

“They’ve completely humiliated her. They have her surrounded and they’re about to arrest her!”

“Where are you?” I was in my car in the blink of an eye. I couldn’t even say how I got down from my office so fast.

“The mall. We entered a lingerie shop and – I can’t even say but they have her surrounded and I can’t do anything because they won’t let me pass through.”

“You and everyone else in that mall will feel my wrath if anything happens to my mate.” I clicked to end the call as I almost ran into a woman crossing the road. People around yelled as I sped by but they wouldn’t dare if they knew who I was or what mood I was in.

‘No one would dare hit her if they knew she was the Luna.’ Zino sneered at me. ‘If anything happens to my mate, I will destroy everything, starting from you.’ He vowed.

I knew he wasn’t joking. He was far from joking. Zino waited for over a century to find his other half. If she’d been stronger, would she be so easy to back into a corner?

‘I don’t care what you have to say. If one hair on her head is missing, Redville will see its end today.’

It wasn’t hard to find her. Once I stepped into the mall, my body pulled me towards my mate and indeed, everywhere was filled as people stared.

“Arrest her. Throw her into a cell!” Someone in front of me yelled. I was tall enough to see over most people’s heads but I couldn’t see my mate then. Some people stepped out of the way for me, right in time for me to see Strauss put cuffs on her.

“Take your hands off her.” The words were my wolf’s and they were quiet. Deadly. Everyone went silent after that. Then people parted like the Red Sea to let me pass through.

“P – prince Valens.” A thin man to the side stuttered my name. Strauss gave a defiant bow but he still had a hand on my mate.

“Are you deaf?” I took a step closer to him. He took a step back without letting her go.

“She is a criminal.” He tightened his grip on her. My mate looked at her feet but I could smell the desperation on her.

“What makes her a criminal?”

“P -Prince Valens! She got a hold of your card and spent a ton of your money.” A girl from nowhere appeared at my side, holding up my card to me.

“She is a criminal! Nothing different from her traitorous parents!” Someone in the crowd shouted and everyone picked it up from there.

“I gave her that card.” Everyone went silent again.

“But – but why?” The girl with my card said, her brows furrowing.

“Does it matter? He said he gave it to her. Let her go!” I caught a glimpse of Lucien in the crowd with his hands clenched and his face slowly getting back to its original color. I told him I never wanted him to be in the same building as my mate.

“Strauss, are you deaf or purposely trying to aggravate me?” I stepped closer to the man. He stepped back, dragging my mate with me. One or two humans stepped into the store to watch the unfolding drama and I didn’t want them to see my shift. “Let her go.”

“I am bound by my duty to apprehend –“ He would spout nonsense to annoy me and I may or may not sever his head from his shoulder but from that moment, I wanted his hands off my mate first. Then I could charge at him and dig out his heart without causing harm to my mate by mistake.

“What does your duty say about putting your hands on your Luna?” His brows furrowed.

“What –“

“You have your hands on my mate.” The people about gasped but it didn’t matter. I could already perceive the blood of this bastard who dared to defy me.

“You mean – what is – that – her!?” He still didn’t let her go. I took another step towards him and he backed away, shoving my mate in front of him like he was about to use her as a shield.

“You fucker!” A bellow so familiar sounded in the room and in a second, we heard a crack, a groan and the sound of someone falling to the ground.

“How dare you put your hands on her?” Jabari looked like he would breathe fire in a second.

“I – we – “ People started to run out of the storeroom when they realized just what they’d done.

“You put your hands on my Luna.” He let her go like she was made of fire and she burned him. “The punishment is death.”

“Alpha!” The thin man at the side exclaimed in horror while Strauss looked like the world was falling around him.

“You never told us. Please –“ They faded to the back of my consciousness as I watched my mate. Her shoulders quivered and her eyes were downcast.

“Look at me.”

“I don’t want to.” Her voice shook as she spoke with her eyes on her shoes.

“Please.” My wolf whined when she refused to look at us. I hadn’t done anything wrong. I reined in my anger so as not to terrify her or hurt her by mistake. My heart clenched when she raised her eyes. They were glassy with unshed tears.

“He’s Celeste’s father.” Her words made no sense until I looked at the man with his head downcast.

“Is that all you care about right now?” So her best friend’s father had no problem disrespecting her in such a manner?

“She’d be heartbroken.” At a time like this, she cared about another’s feeling instead of hers.

“Take him to the dungeons and await further instructions,” I said to Jabari. I took my mate’s hand and led her out of the mall. One or two people had the courage to take pictures of us but I focused on my mate and how she held her head up beside me, held back her tears and followed beside me without fear or fright.

In the car, she let her shoulders fall. She let out a shaky breath before leaning back into the seat. She let her guard down around me and I wanted to believe she did that because she trusted me.

“Thank you.” I watched her but she refused to turn to look at me.

“Thank you for coming to my side and listening.”

“I never assured you I wouldn’t kill him for laying a hand on you.”

“I know but your wolf did.” Her words shocked me. How could she know what my wolf was thinking at this stage of our relationship?

I drove back to the pack house at a slow speed, slower than normal because I wanted to spend a bit of time with her even if it was in silence.

She fell asleep before we got to the pack house and I had the good fortune of watching her face relax in sleep. But it wasn’t relaxed for

long. Soon, she started to frown, her lips moved without forming any words and it looked like she was fighting an inner battle.

I would assume she was dreaming of the unfortunate incident at the store but I knew better. I watched her sleep every night and every night, she fought unknown battles in her dream.

“I want to know all about you, Aysel, including what memories haunt your dream.” I carried her to the penthouse suite while people watched in hushed silence.

When we got to the suite, I hit the switch with my elbow to turn off the lights, and laid her in the bed, The minute I tried to leave, she whimpered, clinging to me. I felt reluctant to leave her so still in my work clothes by late afternoon that day, with a pile of work on my table, I cuddled my mate and fell asleep.