

Chapter 56

I managed to fall asleep in the early hours of the morning but it felt as if I'd just closed my eyes when loud knocking sounded on the door. It took a minute of the knocking intruding into my dreams for me to get the memo to move. Celeste got the door before I fully woke.

When I got out of my room, I came face to face with a grave looking Jabari. The memories I tucked away to sleep came flooding back into my consciousness when I saw him look at me like that.

“What happened to him?” I asked, swallowing down the lump blocking my throat.

“We received a call.” He paused and I wished he would spit out the words faster. The anxiety was choking me. “We – The Alpha pack, I mean. We are moving.” The look on his face was the same one doctors wore to deliver terrible information about their patient.

“So, he isn't coming back?” Celeste demanded, crossing her arms.

“It doesn't seem like it.” He glanced over at me before looking away. “Usually, he sets up an administrative before leaving but it looks as if he is abandoning Redville.”

Without an Alpha, our pack would really suffer. It would leave us vulnerable to rogue attacks and another Alpha could come in and lay claim to our land.

He was punishing Redville because of me.

“He’s leaving us to be ripped apart?” Celeste’s hands dropped to her waist as she assumed a threatening stance. “You better tell that man child that – “

“Celeste.” Jabari’s voice dropped low, his eyes fixed on her, the caution in his words apparent as he gave her a stern glare. “You do not speak of the Prince like that.” His words were harsh, the force behind them making my friend step back.

“So, I’m not even given a chance to explain myself?” I laughed like a freaking maniac. “He doesn’t trust me so it doesn’t occur to him – he doesn’t even give me the benefit of the doubt. He just leaves me and my pack to the rogues?”

“If you could explain it to me, maybe I can make him understand.” I knew Jabari was trying his best to be helpful in this situation. Yet it felt surreal that I’d been dumped without given a chance by none other than the one person who was supposed to be by my side for life.

“I’ve been hurt, blackmailed, threatened but none of it hurts more than him not trusting me.”

“Valens is –“ I knew what to expect. I knew what was to come.

Valens had been betrayed one too many times. Valens had lost his parents to people he called uncle. Valens could not trust but he would believe an outsider over his own mate.

“Are you leaving now? Have you come to say goodbye?” I crossed my arms.

“No.” His eyes darted to Celeste who stood to the side glaring at him. “I can’t leave.”

“Why can’t you? It’s not as if you’ve given me an oath to serve me. You still serve Valens, don’t you?”

“Yes, but you are my Luna. If anything happened to you, I could lose my life. He charged me to protect you at all times so I must fulfill my duty.”

“But where were you when I was drugged and molested? I had no mate then and I certainly had no Beta!”

“What?” He seemed taken aback. “Who dared – “

“It doesn’t –“ The ground underneath me seemed to flip for a second and I felt airborne.

“Careful –“ Hands gripped my waist as my friend held me.

I felt lightheaded as if the ground underneath me was no longer stable. My vision seemed to dim for a second before it sharpened back.

“Has she had breakfast?” The question was directed at Celeste who gave a sharp answer.

“It’s barely six o’clock. You woke us. She threw up her dinner last night so she may be hungry.” She was trying to make me seat when the ground underneath me flipped again and my stomach turned.

I pushed her off me and dashed to the bathroom to unload the remnants of what didn’t make it out of my stomach last night.

“We need to get you to a doctor. I think there may still be remnants of wolf’s bane in your system and you’re reacting to it,” Celeste said as she patted my back with my head on her thighs, two of us sitting on the bathroom floor yet again.

She waited with clothes for me while I took a bath and brushed my teeth. I sat as she brushed my hair and put it into a ponytail. I objected when she tried to tie my shoes. I was heartbroken, not invalid.

Jabari waited for me outside the suite and like bodyguards, him and Celeste walked on either side of me, escorting me to the dining room. I passed a few people and they stopped to openly stare. I knew in a few

seconds that this had escalated past Valens and I. People already knew. They pointed. They whispered. Some laughed.

Octavia and Claudia brought in my breakfast and I didn't miss the gloating smile on Claudia's face as she sashayed into the empty dining room. Jabari and Celeste were stood to one side, discussing something in hushed voices. They were talking about me.

"Not so mighty without an alpha beside you, eh?" Claudia muttered under her breath as she set a plate in front of me.

"What did you say?" I asked, my hands shivering against my thighs.

"Oh nothing." She straightened with a false smile painting her lips. "I just saw something really funny today." Her smile was disgustingly sweet.

"Are you okay, Luna?" Octavia asked in a small voice from across the table.

"Haven't you heard? We don't have a Luna anymore," Claudia piped up, interrupting her.

"Claudia, you're not very bright, are you?" I clenched my fists to stop them from quivering. "I am still mated to Valens. He is still your Alpha and I am still your Luna whether or not you make snide, unnecessary comments." She snickered at my words before sauntering off. She may have added an extra sway to her h**s as Jabari looked over.

"She's just jealous she'd never make it as big as you in life," Octavia said when Claudia was out of sight. "I'm sure your quarrel with the Alpha will be resolved soon," she added in a final bid to cheer me up.

"How do you know about that?" I asked her, picking at my food. Jabari and Celeste were back to muttering and it seemed things were getting a bit heated between the two of them.

“Oh, some gossip blog carried it. It’s all-over social media.” She looked at me with pity and I hated that look almost as much as I hated the tight spot I’d been shoved into.

“And I’m a part of the Alpha Pack now so – uh I heard the Alpha call us on a new ‘adventure’,” she made air quotes around the word adventure.

“Are you leaving then?” I asked. My tastebuds did not register any taste from the food I was forcing myself to eat to save myself the hassle of making eye contact with Octavia.

“Of course not!” The girl exclaimed. “I like this place and I’m sure the Alpha will return soon. There is no need to stress myself packing my things only to unpacking them again.”

Six men entered the dining room before I could answer Octavia. From their build alone, one could tell they were from the Alpha Pack.

“Clover found him,” the man leading the men said to Jabari, paying the rest of us no mind.

Clover. Of course she would be the first person to find him. I wished she would find her mate and leave mine for me.

“You are all set?” The man nodded at Jabari’s question. “Godspeed.” They received his wishes with nods and thanks.

“You are not coming with us?” The lead asked.

“I have a Luna to protect.”

Jabari’s words were not completely out of his mouth when we heard commotion at the door to the dining. Bile rose in my throat and I pushed the tray of food away from me.

“I want to see her, darn it! I have a right to see her.” I swallowed down a lump as I stood from my seat.

I looked around me like someone trapped. I felt trapped. Trapped in this dining room which Lucien could enter at will.

“Aysel?” Someone called me. Celeste.

“I don’t want to see him.” I looked at the door right as Lucien barged in.

“Is he –“ Jabari looked from me to Lucien.

“You heard her!” Celeste exclaimed. “She doesn’t want to see him!” The men from the Alpha Pack blocked Lucien’s path to me.

“What the hell is this? I can’t see my friend?” Lucien was yelling, struggling to get through the men.

“I really don’t want to see him,” I repeated.

“Escort him to the dungeons.” One command from Jabari and the men swung into action, bundling a yelling Lucien away from me.

I didn’t know I was crying until Octavia hugged me, squeezing my tightly.