

Chapter 6

I didn't cry as I sat outside the sanctuary while everyone else ran to take cover. I didn't cry when Skylar pushed her frantic run to laugh in my face. I didn't cry when Lucien tried forcing Celeste to join them in the sanctuary. I held the tears that threatened to spill.

The moon would grace us soon. Goddess only knew what was going on as we sat outside at the foot of the stairs of one house. The decoration hanging from every porch didn't look happy anymore as they did during the start of the Feast of the Moon. The chirping birds seemed to carry a mournful tone with them. The darkening skies carried gloom with them.

"You still have time to join them." I told Celeste.

I didn't want her out here with me where I would worry about her every minute. If she went into the bunker like everyone else, I'd rest easy knowing I was the only one risking my life by being out here.

"If you can't go in, I won't." She took my hand in hers, squeezing them. I laid my head on her shoulder, inhaling her natural sea scent.

"You'd be safe in there." Without her here, I would be sitting alone, feeling sorry for myself yet I wouldn't trade her safety for my comfort.

"While you're alone out here, I can fight but you can't do stop flogging this issue. I'm not leaving my best friend out in a looming war because some douche canoes decided to be jerks." She vowed.

Celeste had a soft, feathery voice which sounded funny when she got upset. At five foot six, no one called her short but her height and size didn't intimidate anyone. Her innocent face and calm aura didn't help

her case but I didn't doubt for a minute that she would pick up a machete and charge into battle if she set her mind to it.

"What do you think is happening now?" I whispered, closing my eyes. The moon's glow caressed my face. At a normal time, we would be praying for the final ceremony of the Feast of the Moon as our shifters tore through the woods but not today.

"He is here." She whispered back.

Yes, the Cursed Alpha Prince and his Beta has arrived on our lands a few hours ago. There had been a subtle tilt in the balance of power on our land. Alpha Zavier stopped being the law and the supreme Alpha. With his power reduced, ours did too. It made us more afraid.

I perceived unfamiliar wolves all around me, the different in the smell around our homes so startling that even my bad nose picked it up. Yes, we had invaders.

"I'm scared." I admitted to her, squeezing her hands tighter.

I hated my pack and what they did to me. I hated my Alpha. My allegiance to these people had waned over the years, dimming with each punch, each kick and each harsh word. My bond to the pack weakened over the years from being left out so much but it didn't break. A thin thread connected me to this people so I could feel the anxiety we all felt as a pack – the dread of the unknown.

"Me too." Celeste squeezed my hand even tighter.

One of two things happened when the Alpha Pack took over a pack; Bloodshed. Change of leadership. None of which sounded pleasant to pack wolves.

We sat in silence for a long time after that, our heads pressed together as the full moon got bigger and brighter. To our surprise, a few minutes later, we heard the Alpha Call. From Alpha Zavier.

I looked at Celeste. She looked at me. Her hands twitched in a minute, fur beginning to cover her skin.

“I have to go.” When she spoke, she had more teeth than a human – jagged teeth with a mouth full of spittle. I released my grip on her and in a minute, she was tearing out of sight, shredding her clothes as she went. It left me alone a small distance from the pack house.

Alpha Xavier wouldn't give up his rightful position without a fight. He had the right to rule Redville – earned it by blood. No one comes into another alpha's territory to take from him without a fight. I just hoped this fight wouldn't be too devastating.

No news media covered the events of an Alpha Pack's takeover and historians liked to distort history to cover up a thing they didn't feel proud of. Only a few textbooks covered Prince Valens' life and exploits. Books that our schools banned. Some packs studied him as I learnt a while ago but others felt as if uttering his name could conjure him.

I dusted off my clothes as I stood to return to the pack house. I couldn't sit out for too long.

The howls of those partaking in the run reached my ears even from the distance I walked from. A lot happened since the start of this feast that it felt the drama came with it. It made me wish it would pass with it but the rotation of the earth couldn't throw Prince Valens from our lands, unfortunately.

Tomorrow we would wake to hear the verdict. Until then, I planned to sleep for a while with the hopes of the invaders not invading my space. I was happy to live in the basement then. The invaders already took over the pack house but no one would want to stay in the cold basement.

The house wasn't as I expected it to be. I didn't see any of the invading wolves around as I walked. No one stood outside the pack house to pray for a better Feast of the Moon next year so it felt safe to assume only

those who could shift and couldn't resist the Alpha's Call had come out of the bunker to run.

Why Alpha Xavier called for a run at this precarious time was beyond me. No matter how much he tried to make it seem as if everything was under control, we knew better, we felt the truth.

The invaders hadn't taken over the pack house either. The rooms were empty, some askew as the owners rushed to flee the house, doors open and rooms empty.

The pack house housed seventy wolves. It was nerves, ever quiet – not even at midnight when the boys liked to play video games and practice their dance moves. But this night, at barely seven, the house was as quiet as a cemetery at night.

I trudged down to the basement and went into the room I called mine. The basement seemed colder that night. Without the exhaustion of a full day of hard labor, I couldn't go to sleep. Many things ran through my mind, keeping me awake. How could I sleep when enemies had set up camp in the home I'd known all my life?

The wolves ran now, hunting. Out Alpha may address us by tomorrow morning if the Prince didn't mount his head on a spike in front of the pack house before morning.

What were their moves? What would be ours?

I felt helpless here. Out of the loop. Rejected. An outcast. My traitor blood kept me out when my pack built a shelter for themselves.

Celeste wouldn't return and it made me half glad and half-sad. She would go into hiding with them after the run while I stayed out with the enforcers, the warriors, the Alpha and his Beta. Those tasked with protecting Redville would do their protecting while keeping the pack members safe. The only outcast – me – would be caught in the crossfire.

Minutes rolled into hours and when I couldn't sleep, I got out of the flat lump I called a bed, going downstairs to the kitchen. I had to exhaust myself before I could sleep.

The kitchen was as I left it; with washing water and a pile of clean and another pile of dirty plates stacked inside. I went to washing the plates with my heart in my throat.

They didn't allow me into the sanctuary. I couldn't hide from the crossfire. I knew I couldn't hide but my room in the basement felt safer than this kitchen on the ground floor with windows looking outside.

My heartstrings played a violet, ear splitting sound when I felt the chill in the atmosphere as a being so powerful, his very essence seemed to suffocate me, entered the pack house.

My hands in the dishwater shivered, disturbing the water and making bubbles rise from the water.

I gasped when he entered, lowering my head before I made the mistake of looking into the soulless black eyes the myth said he had.

“Is there food in this house?” His cool words reverberated with power. I nodded. He couldn't be talking to anyone else but me. “Fix me something to eat.” I nodded, moving around the kitchen in haste to fix him something from the food we prepared for the final ceremony of the feast.

“Your pack is rude.” I didn't dare look at him and I didn't dare disagree so I nodded my head. “The last pack I visited had people to greet me at the borders – they called them sacrifices but it is the thoughts that count.” I nodded again as he spoke. The food on the plate in my hand danced around as I placed it before him.

“What is your name, omega?” I raised my head a fraction, making the mistake of raising my head to look in his eyes.

I gasped as pain seared me from the inside out. My bones began to crack as I fled the pack house.