

Chapter 60

I was going to be a father. My curse was broken. I don't think I had ever been happier than I was then.

When we landed in Redville, I took a deep breath of the stent of the place.

When I first arrived, there was no indication that this place would be any different from the others. When my mind set on claiming Redville, it didn't feel any different from all the other times when I seized on an idea.

I'd long since adapted to the life of a wanderer. My leaving a pack was as swift and unexpected as my taking over it. My wolf told me he wanted a place and my body itched until I got up and went to take it. I'd repeated that process over forty times so there was nothing special or exhilarating about it.

In the early days of my curse, I'd assumed the itch to move, to settle someplace else was a sign. The itch controlled me as I first saw it as a clue. I thought of it as a prompt from the goddess to enter a new land where I would find my mate.

I couldn't spend more than three months in the first five packs I conquered. After the first month of conquering, the itch to leave returned and I foolishly thought it was a sign that something different awaited me in the next pack.

It took me a while to realize I was driven by the curse, that the goddess was not directing me to a land where I would find my mate. That realization was a harsh blow and with it came bloodlust.

Coming to Redville did not spark anything inside me. I didn't know it would change my life. I didn't expect to find my mate here. In fact, I fought the urge to come here for a long time. From what I'd bothered to gather about the pack before invading, I'd learnt that the Alpha was without a mate and the pack was horrible to lower-ranked wolves. They had a smear on their reputation and nothing was appealing about them. Though they were many and strong, they had no natural resources and no wealth.

I'd have met Aysel six months earlier if I'd given in to the first urge to come here. I'd have met my mate sooner and the knowledge that I'd delayed made me annoyed with myself. If only the goddess had given me a hint. But alas, she preferred not to meddle or so her oracles liked to say.

“Welcome back, Alpha.” My driver greeted me.

I got into the car and called my Beta.

Zino started to pace when the trip started. ‘Something is amiss,’ he said and I felt it in my guts that something was out of place.

“Where are you?” I asked once Jabari picked up the call.

“I'm in my office.” He sounded disgruntled when he picked up. “There hasn't been any sign of Zavier in his usual hideouts today.”

“Do they know about my return?” I looked out of the window at the buildings speeding by as we drove.

“The whole world knows of your return. There are dozens of pictures of you at the airport.” Jabari grumbled.

“He will retreat if he knows I'm returning.”

Zavier was a trash Alpha and we had a score to settle but I would give him grudging respect for putting his pack before him. A handful of Alphas had run off when I entered their pack and a number of others had chosen to wage war with my pack.

Zavier handled things better than any other Alpha I ever displaced. He didn't run away in the middle of the night like a scared dog, neither did he drag his pack into his battle. He fought like an Alpha and accepted his defeat like one too.

"I think so too but I'd feel better if I knew that for sure." Jabari sighed.

"How is Aysel?" My fingers drummed on my thighs.

I wanted to get her something upon my return but I couldn't put off seeing her for long enough to buy her a present. I'd asked Jabari to arrange something instead.

"I haven't seen her since I dropped her at the hospital this morning but she should be fine. I sent Andrew to pick her up."

"Alright."

I watched as we passed an accident scene. An overturned car, partly burnt, lay on the side of the road. My wolf paced when we saw the car.

"Stop the car." My driver pulled our car to a screeching halt. "What happened here?" I asked as I got out of the car.

"I don't know but I heard it was a hit and run." My driver also got out of the car with me as I approached the scene.

"Gentlemen," I called to the officers circling the scene to get their attention.

"Alpha!" They snapped to attention. "Welcome back."

The longer I stood here, the faster my wolf paced. The whole place smelt like smoke and petrol and it irritated my senses.

“What’s going on?”

“A hit and run. One casualty.” I walked around the vehicle, surveying the area while the police officers filled me in.

My phone rang again and I fished it out of my pocket. “Valens, where are you?” Jabari sounded frantic on the other end of the phone and it made my wolf perk up.

“Did you know there was an accident?” I asked instead of answering.

“Yes. The police will send a report. I can’t handle everything but that’s not why I’m calling you. Celeste called. She can’t find Aysel.” My ears rang but I tried to keep my composure.

“Officers, are you sure there was only one person in this car?” The men nodded. “Who was he?”

“He hasn’t been identified yet. He is in critical condition and we’re not sure he’ll make it.”

“Jabari, call the hospital. Ask them if the casualty is Andrew.” I ended the call with Jabari.

I closed my eyes. I had to be calm to open a mind link. I didn’t have one with Aysel because we hadn’t performed the Mating Ritual yet. I only had one with my Beta. I closed my eyes and concentrated on the never ending buzzing in my head.

There were threads of the numerous packs I controlled, my connection to the Alpha Pack being the strongest.

I fought to maintain control, to hold on to a bit of my sanity. I needed to concentrate to find which of the threads linked me to Redville but I felt my sanity slipping. The longer I searched, the more frantic I got.

One opened. I heard Jabari. ‘The car. It was Andrew.’

I opened up all the channels.

“Find my Luna. If anything happens to her, all of you will perish. My wrath will be felt down to your third generation. I swear it on King Thomas’ grave.”

I heard the silence. I felt the scramble. I shut the channels as an overwhelming sense of fear rocketed into me.

“Alpha – Ah – We –“ The officers standing beside me had gone white as paper.

“She was here. In this car.” I glared at the men one after the other. “I better find her unhurt.”

Herself and our child.

Jabari called again. “Now the world knows she’s missing. Celeste has put up pictures on social media. I’m on my way to you.” What good would social media do at this point?

‘We can’t just stand around. She was here. I can feel it,’ Zino said. ‘My senses are better than yours. I can sniff the place,’ he suggested but I knew the smell of petrol would hinder even his senses.

I focused on the screech of tires as officers started to troop to the scene. They asked questions amongst themselves. Trackers arrived and they sniffed around the car but the smell of petrol was too strong.

“We need something of hers.” The head tracker said just as Jabari arrived in a car with Celeste.

“I brought something of hers.” Celeste brought out a familiar shirt. She handed it to the head of the trackers and the men passed it amongst themselves. One by one, they started to shift.

“It’s trending on several platforms already and now everyone seems to have seen her in one place or another,” Jabari said, typing away speedily. “Another message, wait –“

“Someone from Blue Moon says they just scented her along Mason Boulevard,” Celeste read from her phone.

“How do they know her scent?” Someone asked while others shifted and followed that lead.

I called the Alpha of the neighboring pack. He picked up on the first ring as if he had been expecting my call.

“Lock down Mason Boulevard.” I ended the call.

Celeste listed off other places around us where people said they’d seen her. More officers arrived. More trackers. Nosy people. The place started to crowd.

Everything was happening fast yet nothing was happening.

“No –“ I heard Celeste exclaim. My phone rang. I picked it up.

I’d spoken to at least five Alphas at this point and my phone was constantly ringing.

“A- Alpha – We have a situation.” Jabari shoved a phone in my face. What I saw on the screen made my b***d run cold. “They have her hostage.” The Alpha of Blue Moon and I said at the same time.

“It’s Zavier and Bethel.” Celeste said. One of them had a knife to my mate’s throat and it didn’t look like she was conscious.

“Should we let them go?” The Alpha was asking but my head was swimming.

Anxiety and rage. They swept through me in equal parts.

“They shouldn’t hurt her. I –“ Even the person recording the video screamed when Bethel shoved her away violently and dashed into his car, leaving his father.

“Kill them.”