

Chapter 86

Celeste and Jabari were not doing well. I didn't need to get his number for her because she already had it but she still refused to text him. He texted her one day, exactly a week after Valens brought her home. She called me after that, crying her eyes out. I realized things were worse than I first thought. She was getting increasingly afraid of him with each day that passed. She made up numerous scenarios in her head and in every one of them, Jabari was the villain out to get her.

I'd asked Valens if she could move in with us. I knew being alone in her family house could not be good for her. He agreed but the girl refused so I was going to move her myself.

"Why are you doing this? I'm fine, really." She protested, unpacking the bag I just packed.

"You are not fine. You've lost too much weight and I know you aren't eating. There's no one to cook for you." I started packing the bag again.

"My therapist thinks I am improving," she lied.

"After five days? During which you've become a ghost of yourself?" I stuffed things into a bag. "If she really said that, we might have to find you someone else. "

"I am fine here," she said, flopping into her scattered bed.

The state of the house was enough to have me worried if I wasn't already worried. It was a total mess; coffee mugs collecting mold in the living room, the kitchen turned on its head, mud tracks on the ground,

clothes all over the floor in her room and a rotten slice of bread on her bed amongst a number of other things. Celeste was a neat freak on a normal day.

“All right, I believe you are fine here.” I flopped into bed beside her. ”I am worried about you,” I said but she didn’t seem to be listening. “I’m not comfortable with you staying here alone so I’ll move in with you instead.”

She turned to look at me as if I was crazy. “I’m not, sure the Alpha would want to stay here.” She sat up, shaking her head. I laughed at what she was insinuating.

“Valens isn’t my handbag.” I snorted. I imagined the look on Valens’ face if I mentioned moving in with my friend. Yeah, that was an impossible move.

“Ok, I can’t move in with you.” I sighed, defeated.

“How about the pack house then? I don’t think your being alone here is helping matters at all.”

In the end, I succeeded in getting her to move in with me for a week. We’d commute together from the house every morning seeing as I now had a job; a full-time, time-consuming and energy-draining job of being the Luna.

“You should be asleep,” Valens said as he came into the room that night.

After picking up Celeste, I never went back to the office. We’d both come back home and after getting her settled in the farthest part of the house which was the only place she agreed to stay, she’d taken a bath and fallen asleep. I’d taken the time after that to prepare dinner for everyone before getting to the work piled on Valens’ desk which I now made mine.

“Hi.” I got out of the seat to place a distracted kiss on his cheek. “You are back late.” It was almost midnight when he walked in.

“Did you not get my message?” He asked as I helped him out of his jacket.

“What message?” I went back to my seat, pulling my laptop closer.

“I told you I was taking Jabari on a run.” My laptop closed as I tried to read a line.

“What are you doing?” I asked, confused as he closed my laptop and grabbed it off the table.

“You should be asleep,” he commented, holding my laptop against his thigh. “Why are you still up? It does not seem as if you have plans to sleep soon.”

“I skipped out on a lot of work to help Celeste settle in so I’m trying to go through them before I sleep.

Can I have my laptop back?” I asked, my eyes trained on the silver devices in his hand.

“You woke up by four a.m. today,” he said as if I’d easily forget the fit, he threw when I got out of bed early and woke him in the process. “And it is midnight yet you are still awake and I know you didn’t have a nap today.”

“How is Jabari?” I asked, pulling a stack of papers to me. If he wouldn’t give me back my laptop, I would have to work the old-fashioned way.

“Did you tell him he can’t come around this week?” I didn’t know how Celeste would react if he came here like he did every now and then, randomly checking in on me when the guilt from neglecting his duties caught up with him.

“Yes, I told him.” He put a hand on the stack of papers. “Can you stop working for a second?” He looked peeved when I raised my head.

“What is it? I want to get this done as quickly as possible so I can go to bed. I’m exhausted.” I suppressed a yawn after saying that.

I had a lot of work and I always kept falling behind every day. I didn’t want Valens to have to pick up even the smallest of my duties now that he was shouldering his and picking up the slacks Jabari was leaving.

It sucked that the duties were so specific to certain positions in the pack. There was only so much delegation that could be done. Valens could and would have to pick up after me if I started to slack off but I could not pick up any of his duties. Only Jabari could take on a bit of his work; a tiny bit.

“You look awful,” he said. I leaned back in surprise.

The last time he made an unpleasant comment about my appearance was the day he told me I was not his type. “You need to go to bed. Now.” His tone left no room for debate but I had to debate. If I left it, I would have to attend to it the next day, piling my work.

“It will take me less than two hours to complete that account,” I said, trying to move his hand but all I succeeded in doing was wrinkling the papers.

“Can you stop, please?” I looked up at him but his face remained impassive.

“You are tired, Aysel.” I opened my mouth to argue.

“Get out of that chair.” Even if I wanted to argue, I could not. He’d let a bit of his Alpha power leak into his tone and my wolf could not disobey her Alpha’s command. “Take a bath and go to bed. I never want to see you in this seat, ever again.”

The Alpha's command leaked into his tone and I had no choice but to obey. I tried to do the basic calculations while I was in the bath but once the water hit my skin, my eyes started to close. I managed to lather my skin with body wash, my limbs suddenly too tired to move.

The bathroom door opened and Valens joined me.

"I didn't mean to command you," he said, his breath tickling my ear. I felt him against my back, his hand on my shoulder. He took the washcloth from me to scrub my back. "I just don't like seeing you overworked."

"We have an equal number of hours each day. You get everything done while I only ever manage to complete two-thirds of what I am supposed to do."

I leaned against the bathroom tile as he cleaned me.

"I have to work longer hours if I'm ever going to do a good job as your Luna."

"I told you that you would have to earn your place as my Luna." His words were quiet. "I didn't mean that."

He told me that when we first mated. I had to make myself worthy of him. I knew now that I didn't need to prove myself in any way, but that aside, I wouldn't be a good Luna if I kept falling behind. I told him just that.

"Levana has one pack to manage and she has three assistants. You have forty-four and it is just you.

You are doing more than enough. I never want to see you working past ten ever again."

I went to sleep shortly after that, my body shutting down the instant my back touched the bed. I woke up late the next morning, pissed that

Valens purposely did not wake me. In fact, he already left for work by the time I got out of bed.

I rushed through my morning routine, packed lunch, and was about to grab my pile of work when I realized they weren't on the desk anymore. There was a note waiting for me on the desk.

I completed the report and we found Skylar.' I screamed his name as I ran out of the house.