

## Chapter 15 - Denying the Alpha

FAITH'S point of view

Was she trying to put me straight back into the hospital? If that was the case, what was the point in discharging me?

My heart was pumping so hard all I could hear was the blood rushing through my ears, my chest rose and fell with each labored breath.

Are my ribs breaking? Why is it so painful? Black spots start to dance around the outskirts of my vision. Somewhere in the far distance, I can hear my mother begging me to sit down, to breathe, she sounds so incredibly far away, and yet our noses are practically touching one another.

When I don't respond, I feel the pressure of her hands on me. my shoulders as she forces me down, I want to curl into a ball and hurl, but my mother forces me to sit, gently she raises one knee followed by the other so that they are both touching my chest.

"WHY WOULD YOU TELL HER?" I wanna scream in her face. I try to too, but due to my breathlessness, the impact of it is lost.

"Because what he done is wrong." Was she so blind?

I take a few moments to steady myself. I see her guilt, I do, but how could she be so extraordinarily rash? She could have at least asked me before she approached Cassidy.

"Mom. She will force me to accept him as my mate, but that won't stop him from cheating. Forcing him to be with me will only make him hate me more."

"You don't know that." she tries to cut over the top of me.

"I do, Mom." I can't help but let out a heavy sigh. This whole thing was exasperating.

"He will resent me. Eventually, that resentment will lead him to start cheating on me all over again, that's if he even stops cheating in the first place, and then I'm going to die a slow, painful death, and there won't be anything anyone will be able to do to help me. Not you, not Dad, not even Doctor Charles in there." I point towards to hospital. A lone teardrop from my mother's eyes. I wipe it away quickly.

“There is a chance that by my rejecting Declan that he would die, Mom. Do you think, no matter how small it may be, that Cassidy would be willing to risk her son's life? Do you think that the Alpha will? He is their only heir.”

I don't mention the fact that the pack itself would throw me out. It saddens me to know that they would rather see me die a slow, painful death over many months rather than reject my heartless mate. It's not even guaranteed he would die if I did, but it is certain I will if he continues to torture my wolf the way he is. I want to call them heartless too, but I get it. They are just worried about their way of life. For generations, the Smith family has passed the Alpha down the male line. What would they do without an heir? We would be weak, and weakness could get you killed.

“I understand your worries, baby. I do, but Cassidy is like a family, baby. She wouldn't force you.” she rubs my shoulders.

“We may be like family Mom, but Declan is her family. If Cassidy came to you and begged you to risk my life for Declan's sake, even when it is his fault that it is at risk in the first place, would you?” her eyes are glassy and sad as they stare at me and a little surprised.

“Of course I wouldn't, Faith.” and whether or not she realises it, she just proved my point.

“Exactly.”

We sit together alone in the grass, just staring at the packhouse. It was the very same house that I grew up in, the one that I called home, but it looked different to me now. Now it looked cold and scary, like a prison but pristine.

“What are you going to do” My mother finally asks. We haven't been here more than a few minutes, and yet it felt like hours.

I can see her looking at me from the corner of her eyes. Neither of us could seem to face the other right now.

“I'm going to go to my room and unpack.” I pull a large handful of grass out of the ground, showering us with small specks of dirt in the process. I tended to fiddle when I was nervous.

“And then?” she pushes.

“And then I am going to go and face my Mate. I'm going to tell him, you either shape up and act right, no more cheating on me and ill never bring up the past again. Let's start

fresh, and we can live the way the good moon goddess intended for us too, as soul mates, or I can reject you right here right now.” I slowly drop the grass back out of my hands again before wiping my hands off on my clothes.

It's time to get up from this grass.

“And if he chooses to reject the bond, then that's fine. I'll reject him on the spot before Luna Cassidy or Alpha Jackson can do a damn thing about it.”

I would deal with them after. I wasn't going to let their son drag me down. I wasn't going to let some boy kill Sapphire or me. My wolf meant too much to me to let her suffer.

I extend my hand down to my mother and pull her up with me.

At first, we walk side by side in perfect sync. I could see she was deep in thought, but if she wasn't going to say anything, well, then I wasn't going to ask.

I wonder if Declan did accept me and the bond, would I just be able to forget all of this? I hope so. I do want to be happy.

“Faith.” My mother grabs me by my wrist and tugs me off the path.

“I just want to ask you one more thing before we go in there.” She jerks her thumb towards the packhouse. I got the hint immediately before Mosey's werewolf ears overheard her.

“Yes?” I quipped my eyebrows. I was genuinely curious, what had she been thinking so hard about.

“Tell me, what happens if he accepts the bond, what happens if the pair of you mate and mark, and then later, maybe even months or years, starts cheating all over again? What will you do then? What could you do then?”

My blood runs cold. I hadn't even thought of that. She's right. He could just pretend to accept the bond and then cheat on me. Surely it would have the same effect and possibly even worse on my wolf. Could I leave him after I marked him?

“Then, I'll reject him.” But it's fake confidence. I hoped that I could, but I wasn't sure.

“Faith. That's crazy,” she hisses. “a wolf can die from rejection, and they usually have never been marked. It's suicide.” Her hand covers her mouth, she's trying to stop the quiver of her bottom lip before I see it, but she's too late.

She was right, of course.

“At least it will be quick.”

I can't keep talking about this, not so close to the packhouse. If I run into Declan or Cassidy for that moment, I want to be, no, I need to be composed, strong, poised and above all confident. I couldn't think about this; otherwise, I'd just end up in tears again.

I snatch the bags from moms dainty fingers, and March ahead, I won't look back at her, I repeat in my head over and over again as I walk away.