

Chapter 72 - Denying the Alpha

“Dad, hey, what a surprise. what are you doing here?” I was curious as I had just seen him hastily rip something down that had been taped to our door. I peeped a quick but subtle sideways glance at Kyle. Maybe he had asked dad to come here and had just forgotten to tell me about it. I am sure that dad was just leaving a note or something to say he had stopped by as promised, but when he noticed us coming, he had thought better of it. Except, one look at Kyle, and I could tell he was as clueless as I was. But surely my dad wouldn't be up to anything suspicious, there was an innocent explanation behind this, and I wasn't at all worried. Why should I be?

“Good evening, Mitchell, is there something we can help you with?” Kyle asked politely enough, but I didn't like the traces of suspicion that lingered in the air. It was my dad, for crying out loud, and he had given us no reason to doubt his intentions. Even when I thought he would choose my sister's side over mine, he didn't. And since then, he has never, not once made me feel guilty for being angry at something he hadn't even done.

He's had a very long and challenging day. Kyles is probably just a little on edge. Sapphire tries to reason with me. She was very protective of Kyle even when it came to me.

Hmmm, yeah maybe. I agreed with her to avoid upsetting her further, but it didn't feel like that was all there was to it.

“Oh nothing, I was just coming up to check on my little girl. I miss having her around every day, you know.” My father smiled, but it seemed fake to me. But what would he have to lie about and why?

“What's that you have in your hand Mitchell.” Kyle points to the dark blue envelope dad was trying but failing to conceal from us.

“What this?” Dad's curious facade continues, “it's nothing. I knocked, and you weren't there, so I was just leaving Faith a note. All I happened to have on me was this envelope, but then I saw you coming up the hall, and it seemed silly to leave it there when I was just about to see her anyway.”

Just as I had suspected, he was probably just a little off because we startled him or something.

He is a werewolf, Faith. Dad would have been able to hear you and smell you coming long before he ever saw you coming around that corner. Sapphire's remark makes me feel uncomfortable. She should know better than anyone that we could trust him. What was she getting at?

"It looks a little fancy", Kyle doesn't hesitate to point out. But he was right. It did look very fancy. Why would dad just happen to be carrying it around, and what did he use to write this note with? Why not just mind link me and let me know he had come to visit. His story had holes, I'll admit, and even I wondered why but still, I was on his side. He wouldn't, nor could he hurt my mate or me.

My father stretches the envelope out to me, and I take it from him. His hand scratches nervously at the back of his neck. He only does that when he has trouble with expressing something. Hmm.

"What's this?" I asked my father without really looking at the envelope he'd handed me. I could see Kyle staring at it hard, but I didn't pay him any mind.

"An invitation, your mother and I got one earlier as well, and I came to see you because I thought it had probably upset you, but then it was tapped to your door, and I thought that maybe it would be better if you never saw it all. I'm sorry." He sighed sadly.

"What is it" Kyle snatched it from my hands, but that frustrated me, and I snatched it right back from him. It was clearly mine, and he could wait till my dad and I had finished talking.

"It's an invitation to your sister's Luna ceremony. Samantha and Declan are chosen mates now and have apparently completed their mating ritual. Although word of mouth is they are telling everyone that they are true mates and that your mother and I left the pack because you had been mated to a cruel and dangerous Alpha, and we were trying to protect you. I can't believe that I gave so much of my life in service of a nasty backstabbing trash bag like Jackson. I hope someone overthrows them, and soon, they are not good leaders, and Samantha won't be either. It breaks my heart to say that about my own daughter, who I love dearly, but it's the truth."

Without thinking, I struck the wall so hard that my fist broke through the plaster and hit the wood beams behind, my knuckles bled just a little, but I could already see the minor wounds healing, and besides, it didn't even hurt.

"Damn it." I cursed angrily. I don't care that Declan and Samantha are together or that they are lying about being mates. Honestly, I had seen that coming, and I no longer

cared about either of them anyway. But the idea of them painting Kyle in such a horrible light made my blood boil.

“That doesn’t make any sense. The pack already knows they aren’t mates. And besides, inviting us has to be the dumbest decision ever. We could just go there and tell everyone the truth, sure, one or two people may still take Jackson’s side or Declan’s, but they’ll at least have doubts.” I could care less about supporting Sam. She was no longer my sister, she hadn’t been in quite a while, but I did care about changing people’s perceptions of my mate. He was kind and decent and strong. Declan was the monster. People should know that. They should know who it is that they are dealing with.

“Actually, it’s kind of brilliant.” Kyle scoffed.

Both my dad and I looked at him with such surprise. What on earth does he mean by that.

“Think about it like a beta would, Mitchell, if Faith doesn’t go. Then to her old pack, she looks weak and heartbroken, and that makes Samantha look like the better choice to them. And to the rest of the packs, the rumors Declan and his idiotic parents are spreading would look true. They would assume I stopped her from going so that no one could see that she was being abused by me. If we do go, and Faith starts spouting off about what a liar Declan and his pack are, then it looks like I am forcing her to go there and defend me. Besides, they know that if Faith goes.”

“They know that if Faith goes that her mother and I will too. There is no way we could sit back and let her go to a dangerous place alone, and if we are there at the ceremony, it looks like we have no issue with our old pack and supporting the happy couple. It would also strengthen the rumors that you are a danger to my daughter because if we have grievances with Jackson, why wouldn’t we stay away unless we believed it was a risk to trust you to be so alone with Faith.” Dad finished for Kyle.

Damn, they were right. It was both equally evil and clever.

“It had to be Jackson telling them what to do. Declan’s not that smart. He couldn’t plan a lunch menu. He doesn’t know the first thing about playing pack politics.” Dad huffs.

“It doesn’t matter who’s the idea was.” Kyle said, “either way, we still have a choice to make, one we have to be smart about. I don’t like playing the game, but as you know, Mitchel pack politics are very fragile, and treaties are very important. We rely on them heavily to survive. Jackson is hurting after I cut him off. He wants to see me go down with him. This is far from over.”

“What do you think, Faith?” Dad asked.

“I think this has been a very long day, and I don’t want to talk about this anymore. We can always discuss it tomorrow come up with some sort of plan. Right now, I just want to go for a nice long relaxing hot bath and then go to sleep.” I sigh. I was exhausted, and honestly, I didn’t feel like talking about any of this anymore right now. I was close to emotional overload.

“Are you okay?” My father's eyes soften, almost like he’s pitying me. He probably was. I would feel sorry for someone in my position too.

“I’m okay, dad. I knew they’d end up together. That doesn’t upset me. I was angry because it is Declan. Declan is the monster, not Kyle.” I assure him, and truthfully it didn’t. Declan wasn’t the type of man a girl should pine over. He was vicious and cruel. Kyle was his opposite. I will never regret rejecting Declan or accepting Kyle.

“Are you sure?” My father asks again doubtfully.

“Yes, dad, I’m sure. By the way, stop in at the hospital on the way home. Amelio is awake. I am sure they’d be happy to see you.”

My father's eyes lit up at the good news.

“Really? That’s fantastic. What a relief. How’s he doing?” My father asks hurriedly.

“Go see for yourself.” I smile.

“Okay, let me know if you need anything.” My father hugs me as tight as he can. I leaned into the hug and wrapped my arms around him. It felt nice to have his support.

“Take care of her.” My father shakes a finger at Kyle.

“Always,” Kyle promises, and it makes me go weak at the knees.

giiiirrrlllll swoon. Sapphire almost purrs.

Yeah, I am too.

“Visit soon.”

“I promise,” I said, and he left.

I swung open the door to our room and immediately dumped the envelope into the trash without so much as sparing it another look.

“Does that mean you aren’t going to it?” Kyle asks as he shuts the door behind us.

“I’ll go, but it’s not like it’s something I’m so excited about that I’m going to stick the invite to the fridge.” I shrug. Mom and dad would tell me when it was. I didn’t need the stupid thing.

“Should we talk about...”

“No.” I cut Kyle off before he could finish. I didn’t want to talk about any of it, not the curse, Ingrid, or my sister and ex-mate. I was at my limit for the day.

“I just want to go soak in the tub.” Something about a nice warm soapy bath had a habit of making my problems disappear, at least that is until I got out again.

“Okay, you go get your stuff ready, and I’ll go run it for you.”

Before I could tell him that he didn't have to worry, he dashed straight for the bathroom. Even at the end of a terrible day, he managed to find a way to make me smile. He cared so much for me.