

Chapter 78 - Denying the Alpha

“You ready for this?” Kyle asked as we pulled up in front of Crescent moon's large and luxurious packhouse. We were the last of the cars in a long line.

I can't believe that I am actually back here. The steps were decorated with various floral arrangements. All of them looked very large and expensive in their ceramic pots. Fairy lights were hung strategically to look like twinkling stars, and as I had come to expect, a red carpet. What was the appeal of a red carpet anyway?

It looked amazing. Cassidy knew how to throw a party. I would give her that.

“Strange,” I mumble to myself.

“What is?” Kyle looked around, assessing everything as if it were a threat.

“I grew up here. I have thousands of memories of this very house. I know almost everyone who lives here by name. I know where they train, where they eat, sleep, shower. I can tell you where they keep the ingredients for my favorite recipes. I know everything there is to know about this place.” I stared up at the lights as they shone brightly through the windows, and all I could think about was how I missed baking. I should start it again.

“Why is that strange?” Kyle furrows his brows as if he's confused by something I said.

“It was my home. But I feel no attachment to it anymore. It's as if it's just another house.” I know that that should make me sad. That I shouldn't let Declan or Jackson take this place away from me, it contained every happy memory of my childhood. And yet I felt nothing, I didn't even realize when it happened, but I have well and truly let this place go.

I don't think that we were ever meant to stay here. Declan was never the right choice for us. I see that now. Sapphire felt the same way that I did. This place was just a memory now, and not even a good one.

“Did you need a minute?” Kyle asked.

“No, everyone else is getting out of their cars.” I gestured to the numerous cars in front of us. And the groups of people lingering by them “We should too.”

“Oh my gosh, Faith, I just knew you’d come.” Samantha came bounding over with way too much enthusiasm. I hadn't seen her standing there when we pulled up. Was she waiting for me?

“I missed you.” She smiled as she hugged me, but a blind man could see that it was fake, and her fingers dug uncomfortably into my back.

“I am sorry, but this jacket is new. Please don’t touch me. We all know how you like to steal my things.”, I said as I stepped away from her brushing off the nonexistent dirt. She glared at me so hard I thought her hair might catch fire. If I got lucky, maybe it would.

“I don’t know what you are referring to.” She takes a small step back and places a dainty hand on her bosom as if she was shocked.

Oh please, I rolled my eyes. Her acting could use some work.

“I am so happy for you.” I lie with a false smile when I notice a few confused stares directed our way.

“Thank you” The slithery snake that used to be my sister loops her arms through mine. This time I manage to suppress the roll of my eyes. We never acted like this before we had any problems. I guess she was determined to put on a good show for the crowd.

“I am sure you have plenty of guests to welcome. Please, don’t let me stand in your way, sister. We have all weekend to catch up. Go be a good host. I understand a Luna's responsibility, having recently become one myself, oh too well.” I say politely. I'm not usually so braggy, but everything with Samantha is always a competition. I knew it would bother her that I become a Luna before she did and to a larger pack. Not to mention, I actually belonged where I was. I didn’t have to lie and sneak around.

“Oh, I'm not Luna yet.” she gushed sweetly. But I could see the twitch of her eye, something that only happened when she was genuinely annoyed.

It was petty, but I was thoroughly enjoying it.

“Oh. Good, your free then. Have you met my mate, Kyle?” I was nervous about introducing the pair, though I had no reason to be. I knew that I could trust Kyle.

“Actually, I am not. We set up your old room for you. I trust that you remember where to find it.” She turned on her heel and left.

“Wow, your sisters a delight”, Kyle chuckles.

“Would have been helpful if she had told us where everyone else is staying, but then again, she has never been very bright.” I sigh.

We would have to stay down here until we got the rest of our pack situated.

“Where are the others anyway,” I ask.

“Right behind us.” Kyle looks at me with concern.

“Oh right. Silly me, let’s gather them up and find out where we’re staying then.” I want to get settled before dinner.

I managed to avoid talking to Declan, Jackson and Cassidy, I saw them, of course, but they were all busy chatting with other pack leaders. No doubt trying to worm their way into their good graces. It was Jackson's new beta that helped me with the sleeping arrangements for my pack members.

I wonder if dad knew that they had given my older cousin Brett his old position.

Brett was five years older than me, and although we were cousins, we hardly knew each other. He was my father's younger brother's son. After my grandparents wrote Amy off, we distanced ourselves from much of the family. We visited my grandparents on the odd occasion, but any time Brett was there, he would ignore me, which was fine by me.

“Things seemed a little tense between you and the new beta. Anything I should know.” Kyle asked as we ascended the stairs towards our rooms. Luckily everyone was situated around my old room, so it made it easy.

“That’s my older cousin Brett. We aren’t exactly close. I bet he doesn’t even care about what happened between Declan and me. He will just be peeved that I dirtied the family name.” I rolled my eyes. I don’t know how dad and Amy turned out to be so normal. The rest of the family were all pretentious dingbats. I’m glad I never had to face any of them before I left. My grandmother would have been horrified when she learned that I walked away from the Luna position.

“You never really talk about your family,” Kyle commented.

“There’s nothing really to talk about. They aren’t really a family. At least not to me. They all cared about what others thought of them too much, and I was always embarrassing them. I would help in the kitchen, and my grandmother would say. That’s beneath a beta” I scrunched up my face to mock the old lady who scolded me far too often. “And I made friends with the omegas. She would complain about it every time she saw me playing with any of the lower ranked kids. Basically, the only friend she approved of was

Declan, or my cousins.” I liked Declan and spent the majority of my time with him, but I didn’t feel the need to bring that up now with Kyle. In fact, I wish it was something I could forget altogether.

“Okay, everyone. This is the room where Kyle and I will be staying.” I gestured towards the door. “The next five on the left-hand side are all yours. There are ten of you, so two each to a room.” I explained.

I watched as they all paired off and went to their rooms. It upset me to see David choose the room furthest from us. I hope we haven’t upset him too much. I know he wanted Ingrid to be here with us, and I did feel a little guilty about pouncing on her like that at the last minute, but we couldn’t risk it.

Once I was sure everyone was in their rooms, I grabbed Kyle's hand and dragged him into ours.

It looked exactly the same as it did when I left, except the blood had been cleared away. Things were still broken on the ground, my clothes were spilling from the cupboards, and my shoes were all lined up neatly where I left them.

Immediately, I was transported back to that day. I staggered forward until I fell to my knees and began to cry. That day was the single worst day of my life, and now I was reliving it.

“Faith, Faith”, Kyle's voice rang in my ears, I wanted to go back to him, but I was lost.

“Look at me.” I wanted to find my way back, I did. But I couldn’t. I couldn’t open my eyes. That’s why they put me back in here. They knew that it would hurt me. They wanted me upset and confused. I bet they were laughing about it right now. I’m sure they even think I’ll make a scene and demand a new room. Fat chance I would.

I felt my body lift from the floor, only to be placed on something warm and soft. My old bed.

“Faith”, this time, when Kyle called my name, I focused on his scent. On his touch, on his magnificent voice and I was able to remember where I was.

“I’m sorry”, I whimper.

“No, baby, don’t be sorry what's wrong.” He fussed.

I placed my open palm against his chest and soaked in only what he could give me, the comforts of the mate bond.

“They at least cleaned away my father's blood but my room. Nothing has changed since Declan almost killed my father and me in here. Since the day I fled. When I opened that door, and I breathed in all those old scents, it was like I was transported back there.” I tried my best not to sob.

“We will get a different room then,” Kyle growled. I could feel his anger for me, for the games they were playing through the bond.

“No, don't. Please don't. I don't want them to think it worked. They want to rattle me. Well, they are going to have to try harder than that.” I say determined.