

Chapter 89 - Denying the Alpha

“Wow Brother, you look like hell” James said as he dropped into the chair opposite my desk.

“Yeah, I know. It’s like I just can’t function without her. I can’t eat, I can’t sleep, all I do is train or sit in this wretched office pouring over all this crap”. I shoved the papers roughly across the table in front of James. A few slips on the floor, I watch as my brother bends forward to scoop them up and drop them back onto my desk.

“But I can’t find anything in them. Maybe a fresh pair of eyes will help?” I sulked. I hate asking him for his help. I should be able to find my mate on my own, but if his help got me any closer to finding Faith, I’d ask him for it a million times over.

“Are these the papers Gabe managed to take from Jackson's office?” James asks as he pulls a few of the blue prints from my desk and begins reading through them.

“Yeah. He got everything; land deeds, financial records, pack records, blue prints, topographical maps, personal bank statements even, anything you can think of Gabriel, got.” I hung my head; I had gone through all of these a thousand times. I sent out search parties to every property that the Smiths have ever owned or at least frequently visited. I had been to every abandoned little shack, prison or unused storage room, or even anything even remotely big enough to hold Faith in, including hollowed out trees and caves in my desperation, and yet I had found absolutely nothing. Where ever Declan took her he certainly had help; he wasn’t smart enough to cover his tracks this well.

“Yeah, sure thing, anything for you brother.” James nods as he grabs even more papers from my desk.

“Have you spoken to David yet,” he asked curiously.

“No” I said curtly.

His house was being watched by men I trusted and so far, neither he or Ingrid had attempted to leave.

I was almost done with my interviews and, to both my surprise and annoyance, many of my pack members did in fact see Ingrid return to the pack, and they continued to see her around for the days following. Not a single person had seen or heard her do anything

suspicious, and while that should ease my doubts, it didn't. She could transport herself in and out of the house and no one would be any wiser.

"Do you still think the witch had something to do with it?" This wasn't the first time James had brought her up since they had met. He trusted her even less than I did, and that was saying something.

"What I think and what I can prove right now are two different things. I have an impossible conundrum. Do I trust her and risk Faith and the babies' lives? Or do I say to hell with this and kick her out? The only problem is, she is my only chance at this stage of breaking the curse before the baby is born. I just simply don't have the time to look for other alternatives before the baby arrives, even if Faith was here, and besides Ingrid says she already has an idea about how to break this curse. I don't know what to do, James. It's the same problem I've been struggling with since Faith went missing and I'm no closer to having made a decision about Ingrid's loyalty than I was then, now. Honestly, Brother, if she hadn't tempted me with her supposed plan then I would have kicked her out already. No good can come from having those you don't trust around for too long. Don't get me wrong, I like David. He's been a good beta, exceptional, but he'd be easy enough to replace if he's still set on going with her." And he would be. I would simply do what I did when I first came here to be Alpha. I would have the men fight for the spot. It worked well enough for me the first time around. Why shouldn't it work just as well the second time?

"You know what actually, since you're here, why not come surprise David and Ingrid with me?" James was good back up, and going there would be more productive than sitting here.

"What? Right now? The sun is not even up", James replies, surprised.

"Yeah, why not? I like it when I catch people off guard, they're more obvious liars when they're unprepared." I smirk. Which I did actually find to be true.

"Yeah, sure why not. Maybe I can kick the witches' ass out of here." James chuckles.

"Rise and shine" I announced as I abruptly kicked the door to David's place open, sending it flying off its hinges. James walked in behind me. I tried not to smile as I watched my brother's face turn up in disgust.

"Ugh, disgusting, witch smell" he mumbles, displeased under his breath. Both David and I chose to ignore it.

It was so early in the morning that the sun hadn't even begun to rise, so I was not at all surprised to find them still asleep.

"What the h3ll." David groaned as his body flopped to the floor with a thud. I'll admit I was surprised to find him out on the couch though. Weren't they sleeping in their own rooms anyway? He looked worse every time I saw him.

"If you can't take care of yourself, I'll have to find another beta. You're in no state to take care of anyone, much less help run a pack! You'd be killed in less than 5 minutes if we were attacked." Was I being harsh? Absolutely, but was I wrong? Not in the slightest. Was this the first time I'd made this complaint? Also no. Did it seem to do any good? Still, the answer is no.

"What are you doing here so early" David asked as he scrambled to get up off the floor, ignoring my comments.

"Ingrid said she may have a way to break the curse. It's been days and I haven't heard a boo from either of you. Does she have a way to break this thing or not?" I reminded him of the last time we met. "Or was she just stalling?"

"You also said not to leave the house. We have been waiting to hear from you." He argues back.

"I thought I heard your unpleasant voice." Ingrid walked in from the bedroom.

"Unpleasant? Is that the worst you have?" I glared at her.

"Did anyone see me?" She quickly counters.

"Yes actually." I admitted rather reluctantly. "But that doesn't mean that I trust you. You and I both know you have unusual modes of transport. You could have been sneaking in and out and no one would have been any wiser."

"You can't have it both ways, Wolf. You either trust me or you don't."

Was she serious right now? Trust her, with that hostility, add to the fact that she has made her disdain for my kind pretty clear since the moment she arrived. She had to be joking.

"I'll make it very clear right now. I do not trust you. I'm having a hard time even trusting David right now because of you! Tell me this plan of yours and I'll decide then if I think you're sincere or whether I should kick you the h3ll out of here!" I threatened her.

“Kyle please, I have never been anything but loyal. I know the idea of me leaving may have given you your doubts about me and rightfully so, but I have never done anything to cause this pack any harm and I never would. Everyone I love is here. I grew up here, I mean my people no harm.” David pleads.

“The plan?” I asked again. The truth is, right now, I didn’t know how to respond to David. I know he thinks he’s still leaving and he might, but on the off chance that he does decide to stay, I’m not sure that I want to push things so far with him that they can ever go back to normal, not that I want him to know that. He might try and use it to his advantage.

“Okay, so like I told you. The curse is tied to your life source, right?” She prattles.

“Yes, I remember.” I said coldly. How could I forget?

“Well, I think in a way, I may have dismissed your idea too quickly. I mean I still couldn’t transfer the curse to a bug or something stupid, but I think there’s a chance that I could pass it on.” The way she left it just hanging in the air sent off alarm bells, whatever it was, I wasn’t going to like it.

“Explain. And don’t leave anything out.”

“Well, like I said, it’s connected to you, but curses are very tricky, but that doesn’t mean that they can’t be manipulated by the right witch. Lucky for you, Eloise, while gifted was still in the early stages of her training, she left loopholes, so to speak.” She explained,

“Get to the point”, I cut over her. I didn’t need to know how she came to her conclusions, I just wanted to know if we could make it work.

“Right okay. I can transfer it to someone whose life force mimics yours, so to speak. A male blood relative. Your brother, for example, would be perfect.” She looked directly at James.

“James hasn’t had pups yet, there’s no way I’m sticking him with this.” I cut over her again. I couldn’t ask this of my brother.

“What about dad?” James asks, surprising me.

“What about dad?” I knew what he was getting at, but it still made me uncomfortable. Besides, my father and I didn’t have the best relationship.

“I know what you’re thinking, and I get it, you don’t want to ask dad for help. You two never saw eye to eye. But he’ll do this for you, it doesn’t put him or mum or any baby even in any danger. We’re both in our twenties, mate, I don’t think they’re planning on expanding the litter, and it’s not like the curse will kill him.” He says like it’s no big deal.

“James, I can feel the curse. It’s like a constant weight and sometimes I think it even affects my emotions, like it makes me angry. I don’t want to do that to dad.” Or anybody.

“Kyle asks him. I think you’d be surprised by his response. Mom would kill you if she found out that you had a chance like this to save your baby and you didn’t take it, and I’d tell her believe me, and once she was done with you, she’d finish dad off for it as well, maybe even me for not convincing you.” James argued.

“Fine I’ll ask. But he gets to make his own decision, we won’t pressure him.” I admit I do hope that he agrees, but I’ll be honest, I won’t hide the side effects from him.

“Besides, maybe dad will react to the curse differently than you.” I know James meant well and he was just trying to make me feel better, but his comment actually made me feel worse.

“How do you mean?” I scowl.

“Well, it’s probably harder on your emotions because you’re punishing yourself for the curse. You’re upset at what it might cost you mate, not to mention that it’s a constant reminder of what happened between you and that other thing. Dad doesn’t have those negative emotional attachments to the curse, hopefully it won’t weigh on him like it does with you.”

I could only hope James was right.

“So, you’re open to the plan?” Ingrid smiled like she had won something. It makes the hairs on my arms stand up, but I choose to ignore it and focus on the positive instead. I might actually have a way that I can break this curse and no one has to get hurt because of it. Eventually, when dad passes, the curse will cease to exist and I’ll never have to think about the rotten thing ever again.

“I’m open to it, but that doesn’t mean my father is. I’ll have to speak to him about it first, but before I do, I expect to know exactly how you plan on transferring it from me to my father.” Magic always had a price, I just hoped that whatever this was going to take, it was worth paying.

“It’s simple in theory, complicated in practice,” Ingrid responded vaguely.

“Spit it out.” Nothing I hate more than skirting around the point.

“To confuse the curse long enough to get it to swap bodies, I’ll have to make your life force look like your fathers and vice versa. I need to trick it into thinking your dad is you. Essentially, I need to make it look like you both share just one life. I know it sounds weird and maybe complex, but I think that’s just because I’m having trouble explaining it.” she bites her lip like she’s thinking hard about something. An unusual gesture for her, I’d even say, out of character.

“Okay, so what I will have to do is put you both under. Then I will turn both of you into one big circulatory system. What I mean by that is, I’ll connect you in a way that, as his blood is pumping into your body, yours is pumping into his like one big system. That way you’ll literally be keeping each other alive and the curse won’t be able to distinguish between who is who. That’s when I’ll shift the curse from you to him.” That sounded more improbable than just killing and reviving myself like I originally wanted to be honest.

“Uh huh and please doctor witch, tell me how do you even know that my father and I are the same blood type?” I raised an eyebrow.

“Because all Alphas and their sons have the same blood, that’s where your Alpha genes live and how you pass it down to the next generation. Surely you knew that.”

I can’t believe I forgot that, but she was right.

“I’ll ask my father and get back to you.” I dead panned.

“Come one James,” I said to my brother. I dared not to show it, but for the first time since Faith went missing, I had some hope. There’s still a chance I can save our baby. All I need to do is save her first.

“Uh Kyle” David called out to me as I walked out his broken door.

“Yes?” I answered shortly.

“Do we have to stay in the house?” I could see the torture behind his eyes. His wolf hadn’t been outside in days, just sitting around was probably killing him,

“You don’t” I looked from him to Ingrid to make myself perfectly clear. “David’s free to go, but you are not. The wolves don’t trust you anymore, and neither do I. I don’t want you walking around my reserve unchecked.”

I warned her.

“Come on Kyle, I’ll stay with her.” David rushed to his mate's defense.

“It’s fine David.” She placed her hand on his arm in a caring gesture. It was strange to watch, she hardly ever went near him.

“Come one brother, let’s go call Dad.” James called over his shoulder as he made his way back to the pack house.