

Chapter 95 - Denying the Alpha

My dad wasn't an easy person to talk to. He cut over me a thousand times, lectured me, not to mention there was a lot of swearing and even more judgment, but to my relief, he agreed to help. His exact words were.

"It would look weak to back out of such a thing at the last minute."

And strength, or at least what my father perceived as strength, meant everything to him. He ranted some more after that, about how I should have provided this information earlier so he could have told me to shove it where the moon's glow doesn't grace us. I would have if I had known any earlier, but there was no convincing that man, so I stopped trying too.

We walked silently for most of the trip. Pack members stared at us as we walked by them. I could tell they were surprised to see me with my father. He has only visited us once, and that was to attend my Alpha ceremony. He didn't even come to my uncle's funeral.

A few of my wolves even tried to mind link me about it, but I stayed silent on the matter. Luckily it didn't take long and we were crossing the grassy area in front of David's place. I watched my father out of the corner of my eye, waiting for his reaction. I wasn't surprised when his face became angry and hard the moment he spotted Ingrid.

"Something looks familiar about her but I can't place it." My father whispered so low I almost didn't hear him say it.

"Maybe because she is my first mate's mother?" I whispered back, afraid he wouldn't hear it, but we were trying not to be overheard by the witch ourselves.

David and Ingrid stood at the front of their property with their door wide open as they waited for us.

"No. From somewhere else." He grumbled. I could tell that it really bothered him for some reason.

"We will talk about it later." I answered quickly, hoping to keep him quiet. We were getting close enough now that even whispering, they might over hear us.

“Welcome Alpha Kyle, Alpha James and Alpha, I’m sorry I don’t believe we have met before?” Ingrid greeted us as we approached.

“Alpha Frederick.” My dad says with so much disdain it made even me want to cower.

Wow, I forgot how intimidating he can be. Duke said.

You’re an alpha wolf, you’re not supposed to feel intimidated. I tease him. Although I would be lying if I said I didn’t feel at least a little bit the same way.

I didn’t say I was intimidated, you halfwit. I can admire another’s strength without being afraid of it making me weaker. He replied, annoyed. I had to stifle a laugh at that. Luckily, no one seemed to notice.

“Welcome Alpha Fred.” Ingrid smiled.

“Did I say my name was Fred or Frederick?” My dad bellowed. Ingrid fought it but I could tell she wanted to submit her neck to him. His power and authority were so thick in the air it was amazing she was able to stand on her own.

“I’m so sorry, Alpha Frederick. I should not have assumed. I apologize.” She bows her head ever so slightly and my dad finally starts to reel in some of his power.

“Apology not accepted.” My dad glares at her as he pushes his way into the cottage. He really should have waited for David to invite him in as a matter of courtesy, but apparently, dad was in a bad mood.

“Not the friendliest, is he?” Ingrid tried to make light of the awkward encounter.

“You tried to test him. What do you expect?” I said harshly, knowing that’s exactly what she was doing. If she had disrespected my dad like that on his own turf, she would likely be kicking and screaming her way down to his dungeon as his men dragged her there already.

Two sterile tables lay side by side, with a heart monitor beside each of them. My eyes narrowed in at the straps on the table.

“You try and tie me down and I’ll have your head.” My dad loomed over Ingrid threateningly, but we all knew it was really a promise:

“Kyle, would you allow this witch to tie us down.” My dad asked angrily as he turned on me.

“Absolutely not dad.” I was about to tell her over my dead body myself.

“David.” I snapped at my Beta.

“How sure are you that there’s no silver involved?” I asked, feeling pissed and a little untrusting.

“I handled all the tools and instruments myself. Aside from a very small amount around the tip of the needles, there is none,” David assured me.

“Around the tip of the needle why?” I managed to ask before my father's head exploded.

“Well, it's going to take a while, your systems have to look like one giant system before Ingrid can fool the curse into transferring victims. Without the silver, your body would heal and push out the needle too quickly.” David explains. The more I hear this plan, the more I think about it and the dumber and dumber the whole thing sounds. Swapping blood, tricking curses, life forces etc. Ingrid must really think I was a dumbass, then again, I had fallen for it. It’s a good thing I didn’t try and end my life and revive myself, still even that sounded like a more logical plan than this garbage.

“Would you trust it?” I asked David, contemplating making him try it himself, but torn about whether I should put him through that.

Like he knew what I was thinking, David picked up the needle, pushed the sleeve of his shirt up so the crease of his elbows where you could see his veins was exposed and quickly pushed the needle in. His face pinched in mere discomfort for a minute and then he was fine.

“They’re safe,” David declared.

“Let’s get this over with then.” My dad growled as he stripped down to his boxer shorts and laid them on the cold table.

I quickly did the same.

“James, I would appreciate it if you stayed the night, just to make sure no one tries anything.” I said. I honestly didn’t believe Ingrid would, like I said to James, as far as she knew, we were still none the wiser. Ingrid was playing a game. She has got nothing if she tries anything tonight. She wouldn’t be so foolish.

“I was staying anyway,” James assured me.

“Okay Ingrid, let’s do this” I said.

It had been hours since Ingrid first struck me with that needle. I don't know what was worse. The silence, the stiff uncomfortable table or the constant slow burn in the veins from the silver. I could feel it drain my energy level just a little but it wasn't enough to worry me, so I kept quiet about it.

"Kyle, how do you feel?" Ingrid eventually asked, breaking the silence.

"Fine. Why?" I responded unfazed. But she didn't answer me.

"And Alpha Frederick?" She asked my father.

"Annoyed." He responded gruffly.

I tried so hard not to roll my eyes.

"Okay, well, I think it's well and truly been long enough" Ingrid explained. "I'm now going to start the ritual aspect. It shouldn't take too long, a little less than an hour perhaps. Once I'm done, I will ask you again how you are both feeling."

"Okay" was all I replied and my father didn't at all.

"I will need complete silence. No interruptions please. This isn't the type of thing you can just press pause on." Ingrid said rather sternly as she stared each and every one of us down.

"We understand," James replied. I didn't miss the subtle way he rolled his eyes.

The room slowly began to fill with all sorts of different smells. Singularly, these scents are common and boring. Together they were awful and somewhat overwhelming. I could smell salt, and not the processed stuff that you eat with dinner, but real pure sea salt, lavender, burning sage and a few other things that I either did not recognize or I couldn't place because they were too obscured by everything else.

I wanted to ask her what it was she was saying many times. I do not know what language she was speaking or maybe she was even talking in tongues. All I knew was it wasn't English and I didn't understand a single word of it.

At first, I felt nothing, just the same discomfort as I had all night, but things began to change the more Ingrid chanted. My blood felt hot all of a sudden, and sweat poured from every available pore. I gritted my teeth involuntarily so hard I thought they might crack and all my muscles locked down and refused to move. I lost all control of my body and I couldn't reach Duke although I could still feel him. For a split second I began to

doubt myself. Maybe Ingrid would in fact kill me right here and now. Maybe she didn't care that my brother and David would kill her on the spot for it. Maybe killing me was good enough. What else did she have to live for anyway, she didn't seem interested in her mate and I killed her daughter. Who else did she have. But right as I begin to think, this is it. I'm dying, the pain stopped. My heart didn't feel like it was going to explode anymore. The heat slowly left my body and my arms and legs felt normal again. In fact, my whole body felt better than ever.

Ingrid's chanting abruptly stopped as she slumped into a chair beside me looking rather exhausted.

"It's done" she says with such finality, that even knowing what I did, I almost believed her. But I don't.

Instead of answering her, I looked over at my father as he sat on the table. His expression was stony and unreadable.

"How do you feel dad?" I asked, genuinely concerned about him. I had no way of knowing exactly what he went through just now. Did he feel everything I did, or was it different for him? How angry was he with me?

"I will speak to you in private shortly. I will wait in your office." My dad said curtly as he stood up from the table. No one else said anything as he pulled his pants on, snatched his shirt up and left without so much as a single glance over his shoulder.

The door slammed shut behind my dad, and my brother and Beta clamored around my table.

"How do you feel alpha?" David asked. I was relieved to see his concern for me was real.

"I feel great David." I placed my hand on his shoulder and smiled. I have been so harsh with him, and unfortunately, I will be still for a while longer. But Ingrid's days were numbered, and soon I would get my friend back. At least I hoped I would.

"The curse?" James asked with concern, still playing along.

"Like it never existed." I smiled genuinely as I rubbed my chest. I am not naive enough to believe that I am suddenly cured, however I am glad for the reprieve. Whatever Ingrid did, did actually leave me feeling so much better. The heavy weight that was filled with, anger, hatred and darkness was lifted from my chest. I felt lighter, freer and genuinely happier. My very soul felt better.

"You're welcome," Ingrid snippily said.

“Thank you.” I replied cheerfully, but I don’t really mean it, it’s just another part of the game we are currently playing. And I have to make it seem like I truly believe I’m cured, so, I laugh and cheer and celebrate a little like I should. James and David join me and congratulate me on finally breaking the curse. We even share a drink.

“What time is it?” I asked my brother as the celebration wound down. I do not want to keep my father waiting, any longer than I already have, but I also can’t risk leaving too early. I need to know that I have wasted enough time to give Declan a real chance.

“It’s almost sunrise. We have been at this nearly all night.” David replied instead of my brother, his eyes were bleary and tired but happy.

He should almost be back by now then. Duke says.

Ah your back buddy. I feel so relieved to finally hear from him. I knew he wasn’t truly gone as I could still feel him, but anytime a human can’t connect with their wolf in their usual way, it was cause for concern.

I know that I have more pressing things to worry about, but I can’t help but wonder, and so I ask curiously,

Do you still feel the curse, Duke?

No, I do not. But still, I don’t trust the witch.

At least he and I were on the same page about that.

Don’t worry, neither do I.

“David, please let me help you clean up, then you and your mate can finally get some rest.” I agree with Duke. Declan should be back by now or close enough to it, but still it couldn’t hurt to give him just a little bit of extra time.

“Don’t worry about it, I got it. Ingrid could use some rest; the cleaning can wait for later”. David dismisses me politely.

“Nonsense” I said, not taking no for an answer. “Never put off you’re cleaning.” I jokingly scolded him.

It doesn’t take long, unfortunately, but we clear out the space and pack everything neatly away and return the beds to the pack hospital. I am officially out of excuses to stay and if I wasn’t careful, I’d blow my cover.

“Okay James. We have kept dad waiting long enough now, and he’s probably pissed. We should be going. Thank you again David and Ingrid,” I said as I followed my little brother out the front door.

David and Ingrid both smiled at me politely as I left. Oh, how I wish this really was over, I think bitterly to myself.

I really just wanted to go to my phone and contact Declan immediately. Every fiber of my being was aching with the desire to know how he made it home, how faith was. But first I had to go deal with my father.