

2 - Entangled With The Savage Alpha - Berrybloom

2

Dawn

When I opened my eyes, I found myself still sprawled in the same position on the floor in the now-empty living room. I groaned as I slowly pushed myself upright. My entire body throbbed with glaring pain.

The hunger pangs hit hard; I hadn't eaten all day. Once again, exhaustion pulled at my limbs causing me to fall back.

I laid back, closed my eyes, and tried to will the pain away. But it wasn't subsiding.

My nose picked up the scent of food. It teased my senses and mingled with the echoes of laughter from the kitchen.

Bitterness and hatred simmered within me. My wolf growled angrily. It could still sense my mate's scent, but something about it had changed.

"Looks like she's finally awake," sneered my step-sister. The laughter abruptly stopped.

I had to fight the urge to react.

That bitch.

I wanted to stab her in the eyes and destroy her beautiful face. She'd done a lot of things to me but this was the worst betrayal ever.

She was so greedy. From the moment Grace married my father, Sofia had been provided for. She got everything she wanted and more, yet she somehow only wanted the little I had.

She had won, hadn't she? I felt it in the puffed-up aura of her wolf. She felt like she'd beaten me at everything.

My internal tirade was paused by shuffling footsteps as they all filed back into the living room. From my corner on the ground, I watched them troop in.

The satisfied smirks on the faces of Grace and her evil daughter made me want to scream. But I couldn't do anything. I was too terrified and tired to let my emotions show. On the inside, I was angry but my expression was always pale and cowed.

My wolf whimpered at the sight of my mate's arm wrapped around Sofia. It hurt more than the physical pain I was in.

"Sit up," Grace demanded, shoving a bowl of leftovers into my limp arms.

The desire to fling the bowl at them surged, but I couldn't waste precious food or energy.

Reluctantly, I seated myself, unable to fully relax as my back still screamed in protest from where the silver whip had left its mark.

"Eat," my father ordered, his tone cold and commanding.

Humiliation swirled around me, but I obliged. With hands that trembled, I shoveled bacon bits and chicken strips into my mouth. The flavors were lackluster, but it was sustenance and I needed it.

Their eyes bore into me in a heavy silence.

My stepsister snickered in the arms of my mate, whispering loudly, "Didn't I say it? You all owe me."

Father grunted and her snicker increased.

"Wimp." She mocked, snuggling into Alex's arms.

"How could someone like this become Luna? She'll run this pack to the ground. Alex needs a strong woman beside him, not a weak mutt." She continued.

Grace chuckled, her eyes remaining on me as she watched me eat.

I tried to ignore their mocking, focusing on the much-needed nourishment. Rest and sleep beckoned. I needed respite from the physical and emotional torment I'd just endured. But from the way they all watched me, I knew that my ordeal was far from over.

I could feel an underlying tension in the air. Something was about to happen. Something that I wouldn't like.

Once my bowl was scraped clean, I licked my fingers. There was nothing to be ashamed of anymore. Alex had betrayed me already. Why should I try to be prim and proper? I didn't need to impress anyone anymore.

"Stop that." Alex hissed suddenly as if he heard my thoughts.

His voice was commanding, his aura so powerful that my hand fell to my lap. This is the first time he'd addressed me today.

He sat up, pushing Sofia away as he stared into my eyes. Automatically I leaned forward, seeking and reaching for the connection we shared. I got nothing.

"What happened?" Alex asked.

I blinked, my head was blank.

Wasn't I supposed to be the one asking that question? Wasn't he supposed to be explaining everything to me?

The accusation in his tone grated my nerves.

"Are you that dumb?" He gritted, his dark eyes narrowed into slits. For the first time, I felt the power of his Alpha wolf. It commanded me to speak.

"You betrayed me," I croaked.

The room erupted into laughter, and he smirked.

He stood up and walked to me. He grabbed my face roughly and looked at Sofia before facing me.

"If not for the respect I had for your family, I would have ripped your head off, for that silly interruption of my mating ceremony."

My heart squelched.

"You are not my mate. You never will be. And even if the Moon goddess decided to make such a mistake, I reject it. I reject you."

My ears were ringing. My wolf was crying. Did he just? It wasn't possible.

What happened to Alex? Was he under some sort of spell? This had to be a dream.

Before we discovered we were mates, Alex was the closest thing I had to a friend. He was my knight in shining armor. He had been the one who approached, helped, and listened to me.

Who's this? What happened to my Alex? Alex took care of me. He would never hurt me. I remember how excited he was when we discovered that we were mates.

"Do you hear me?" He growled.

I couldn't recognize the man before me.

"W-what, what happened?" I sputtered. "This isn't you. What did they do to you?"

Ignoring me, he returned to his position and pulled Sofia into his arms.

"I need details, Dawn. What exactly did the head of the servants say to you? Why did he terminate your service at the pack house?" Alex continued.

"He said I wasn't strong enough to complete my tasks. I was weak, underfed, and too tattered." I croaked.

My father released another dissatisfied grunt.

"This is how you pay back your family?" Grace sneered. "Ungrateful mutt, can you do anything right? How are we supposed to repay everything that we owe the pack now?"

Yes. My father owed the Alpha a lot but instead of taking up jobs like every male did, my father made me a slave to pay for it. I was quick so I ran errands between packs. I also did menial and laborious tasks. I slaved from morning till night to pay for a debt that I didn't own. As if that wasn't enough, after working from morning till evening, I had to go and check how much I'd been able to pay for with my services for the day before going home. And when I arrived, I had to inform the family before I was given food to eat.

Grace ranted on about my wickedness but my eyes remained on Alex.

"Why?" I croaked. I was trying to recognize the man before me.

Alex chortled, "Sofia was right all along. You are really very stupid. Did you ever think that you and I could become a thing? Oh please. We both know that the only reason why I haven't announced my true mate to the pack is because of the rules."

His lack of remorse made me feel worse. I suddenly realized how stupid I was. In our pack, a female couldn't be mated before her elder sister. I was the eldest and until I was mated, no male was supposed to approach Sofia. Alex had used me to get close to my sister.

Dry laughter escaped my throat. I wondered what their plan was. What they did tonight was an abomination. If the word got out to the rest of the pack, he would lose his chance to become Alpha. Is that why we were still here?

Did they want me to continue pretending that he didn't reject me? Did they need me to play the role of a fool?

"You leave me no choice." My father said suddenly.

My eyes perked up and I looked at him. The emotions in his eyes surprised me. For the first time in a long while, he looked sorry.

My heart jumped. My wolf wailed. It sensed a storm worse than the one I was in.

With a grin, Grace jumped to her feet and dumped a package on my lap. "Open it." She hissed.

I stared mutely at it. I looked up and saw a gleam of victory in all their eyes, except that of my father.

He looked like he was about to break down. My body began to tremble. I preferred it when my father spoke to me without compassion. He looked like he was drowning in regret.

There was no way in hell, I was going to open that package. It had to be Pandora's box. I knew whatever was inside was worse than anything I could conceive. I looked to my father for help. But he bowed his head and cleared his throat.

Grace sucked her teeth impatiently and tore open the package. Different photographs and two other sheets of paper fell out.

I stared at the photograph. It was that of an old creepy-looking man. He was older than my father. I didn't understand. There were many pictures of him. I grabbed the second sheet and it was an address.

The tension was suffocating me. Was this the new place that I would work in? Was that my new master? It didn't make sense. Why, then, did father look so guilty?

I picked up the final sheet. It had more weight than the rest. I flipped it over and gasped.

It was a marriage contract, signed by my father in exchange for the money he owed. A marriage contract between me and Rhys Hallowvern.

My body shut down. I felt numb like I was floating in my subconscious. But I could hear a voice screaming in pain.

The pain in the voice resounded with mine. I could barely see. I didn't want to see it. This had to be the most cruel joke yet.

I'd heard stories of Omega's being sold off into marriage with rich old werewolves who needed a baby. Omegas were naturally the most fertile of all werewolves, so those beasts used them as baby-making factories. The omegas were brutally dealt with until they died of exhaustion. It was how packs breed and increase in size. I not only heard the horrid stories, but I'd seen some who escaped.

Was this happening? Was this really happening?

It was only when someone shoved me into my room and locked me in that I realized that I was the one screaming and clawing at the door.

I didn't stop. I couldn't stop. This was the lowest of all. It was evil, it was vile. It was horrible. The pain from being betrayed, rejected and sold off morphed into something that I couldn't recognize.

Rage. Pure unfiltered rage roared through me. I was losing touch with reality. I could feel my sanity slipping. I was going rogue.

My blood was smeared on the walls as I continued to hit and scream. I don't know where the energy came from, but it fed me with strength.

I screamed for hours, breaking my puny fingers and wrists as I punched holes into the walls.

The door flung open after a while and Alex came in. His eyes flashed gold showing that his wolf was present. He growled at me and instead of fear, I growled back and lunged at him. My fists connected with his face.

Irritated he flung me away. But I was up on my feet in a second. I'd always been known for being fast. I was faster than most wolves. It was working to my advantage. My claws dug into his skin and I dragged them down.

He was stronger than me, so with little effort, he detached me from his body and held me by my neck. I didn't feel pain. I was powerful. I writhed manically in his grasp until I successfully lodged my claws in his cheek and dragged it.

He let out a scream and tossed me away. I fell out of the room, and there stood Sofia, terrified for her life. With a growl, I grabbed her hair and smacked her into the wall.

I dragged her back, ready to attack again. I was relishing in her fear and screams.

"She's going rogue!" Alex growled, slamming into me. "We have to put her down."

Knowing what was coming, I struggled until I was free and bolted out of the house to freedom.