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Dawn

"Great. Now the whole pack knows how he feels about me." I mumbled as I sped to the pack house.

I wanted to scream. I wanted to shout down the heavens. But if I did, I'd be letting everyone know how much he affected me. I wouldn't give them that satisfaction. I would never let them know how my daydreams mostly consisted of Rhys and I together. Of how I'd somehow conjured a charming image where I was obsessed with him. No one needed to know how I consistently thought of our night together. Of how it seemed like my whole existence was revolving about him.

All they needed to know was that I was having a horrible week and he'd just hit the last nail that sealed the coffin. He'd given the snots ammo that they'd been digging for.

No matter what Kaden or anyone said. After now, I was never setting foot in that etiquette lesson, ever. Maybe it was time I set my foot down about something.

"Wait up!" One of the triplets called. It was probably Layla, but I was too angry to care. I was not waiting up, nor did I need them or their pitying glances. I just needed to lock myself up in the room for the rest of the day. Or maybe until the remaining 6 weeks till this sham was over.

A hand gripped my arm roughly and pulled me to an unwanted stop.

"What is it?" I snapped. My wolf, also hurt, was at the forefront of my consciousness begging to take control.

Kaden jolted back and freed my arm, he was momentarily stunned by the force in my voice. I was too. It reminded me of how much my wolf had morphed into something else entirely.

"I'm sorry." He apologized sincerely. "I shouldn't have asked you to join the training."

I scoffed. "Are you for real?" My voice sounded a lot harsher than I expected.

Kaden backed up even more, looking skeptical. Princess and the triplets formed something like a circle around me.

I eyed them. "What is this? Another cage? Another cage like the ones I've been living in all my life?"

They were fanning the flames of my anger. I was beginning to feel like I did on the night I was betrayed by my family.

Something flashed in Kaden's eyes. I recognized it immediately as fear. If I was in my normal sense, I'd be afraid of whatever he was afraid of.

Just then, Rhys rushed in and grabbed me so quickly and fiercely. He moved so fast that my surroundings blurred around me. In a minute we were in his Den.

I laughed as soon as he set me free. "What's this?"

He stared at me. "It's happening again isn't it."

"What is?\*" I spat.

"You're angry that I rejected you before everyone. And once again, you're exhibiting the character of someone who's about to go rogue. And this time, you're doing it in public." He hissed.

"Rogue?" I questioned. "This isn't rogue. You and I know that."

"But the rest of the people in this pack don't! They don't! We have a secret and I'd love to keep it that way!" He snapped.

He was pulling the last strings of my patience, aggressively. The only reason why I'd not attacked him was because I loved his scent too much. It had a calming effect on me.

"And your point is?"

"Our marriage is political. The nobles are not excited about it. They are looking for a way to kick you out. I may have given them an ammo but what do you think is worse, my declaration out there or rumors that you might be rogue?"

I paused, hating how much sense he was making. Panic began to take over my anger.

"I'm tired," I screamed. "I'm tired of you. Your rules. Your pack! Your Nobles. I can not even breathe in peace. I can not attend one lesson without being hissed at or murmured about. I've been called vile things. And then you had to crown it all up. You're treating me like I'm not doing my best."

"Who? Who insulted you?" He growled, standing inches away from me.

I cackled. "Is that all you heard? This is my problem with you. You tell me to get out. You tell me to disappear. You tell me to get lost. Yet here you are, demanding to know what happened to me. Why do you even care?"

His eyes softened, "Because no one disrespects me. No one disrespects your position whether real or fake. I'm going to make that absolutely clear."

My eyes snapped shut. That wasn't what I wanted to hear. I wanted something else. But it would do.

"Fine." I growled, "Take me out of those Luna lessons. They treat me like trash there."

"Fucking hell! How dare they!" He roared.

His anger calmed mine to the point where my wolf was purring.

"Did they touch you? Did anyone physically harm you? Did they say anything to your face? Or was it just passive aggressiveness?" He asked.

His eyes were turning gold as his anger flared. I blinked. Why was he even getting worked up over it?

He grabbed my chin and gazed into my eyes. "Listen to me carefully." He rumbled. "No one. I mean, no one has the right to speak to you in any way that isn't respectful. As long as you're mine. No one has that right. And I promise, anyone who does that will pay dearly."

I gulped, suddenly feeling bad for being a tattletale. In my defense, I didn't think he would care.

"Stop fucking staring at me like that." He said, releasing my chin like it was scalding him.

I blinked. Perplexed about how I must have been staring.

"Those lessons are compulsory." He said, taking deep breaths, "However, I'll have Kaden handle it. Is there any other problem?"

I blinked again. Did this big bad wolf just calmly ask me if I had any other problems? My wolf loved it.

"Uhm none," I muttered.

"Then take a seat and tell me about your wolf." He commanded. "You exhibited too much dominance for an omega this evening. I could feel it from where I stood. Even Kaden and the triplets were unable to withstand it."

I swallowed and moved to a comfy seat that he gestured to. I didn't know where to start or how to begin without sounding crazy.

"Has your wolf always been like this?" He asked, taking the words right out of my mouth. His voice was a lot softer than before.

I shook my head.

"Use your words, Dawn." He sighed.

"I've always felt that my wolf was not as docile as others. Instead of shrinking back in fear, it was always ready to fight and challenge anyone. However, I was always in control and barely let it slip to the surface. But after that night, it seemed as though something unlocked within me." I confessed. "And since then, I've been acting weird."

"Yeah," He muttered. "There's only one person who I know can properly diagnose you. Unfortunately, he's dead. I'll find a way though. But for now, we'll let people believe that it's my dominance that's rubbing off on you."

I scoffed and folded my arms, "No one is stupid enough to believe you."

"They will." He growled.

"How?" I shot back. "We're not mates and we didn't mark each other."

He smirked and stalked me. "But you did Dawn. Don't you remember sinking your claws into my shoulders"

"That wasn't a proper mark," I argued.

He knelt before me. "No one has to know." He said.

"But-" I was cut off by the feel of his hands behind my ears.

"What are you doing?" I whimpered.

A sharp pain followed. He swallowed my yelp with a hard kiss. My hands automatically wrapped around his neck and I returned the kiss eagerly.

He broke the kiss too quickly for my liking. "Now we have two marks." He said breathing heavily. "This would keep my scent on you."

"But-" I started to complain but he shut me up with another kiss.

My body felt like a live wire as his lips moved against mine. I'd missed this. I'd missed this too much.

The sound of incoming footsteps had us flying apart.

"Now we have a believable story." He said hurriedly. "We'll run with it until I figure out what's wrong with you."

I wasn't paying much attention to what was being said. I only knew that once again he'd awoken an appetite that I struggled to shut down for more than a month now.

He could see it in my eyes because he pulled me up and shook me roughly. "For fucks sake Dawn. Snap out of it!"

I wanted to laugh at him and tell him that the lust in his eyes was as clear as day.

"Stop deceiving yourself. This doesn't change anything. I'm not attracted to you. I don't want to see you."

I wanted to laugh at him for lying. But his lies didn't stop the hurt.

"Yes. I understand." I told him and stepped out of his hold.

The door flung open almost immediately allowing Lex, Kaden, Princess, and the triplets to troop in.

"The Pack is buzzing," Lex announced smugly.

"With what?" Rhys snapped.

"Dawn is all they can talk about." He replied happily.

"That's why I brought her here to interrogate her." He said. "How many people witnessed that scene?"

"Not much," Kaden said, his eyes fixed on me. "But enough to circulate rumors that she's insane."

I looked away, feeling ashamed.

"She's not." Rhys declared. "Stop staring at her with so much caution."

All eyes left me and focused on Rhys.

I had to fight the urge to hide behind him. My body on the other hand was still buzzing with so much lust.

"She has been acting strangely recently," Lex said coldly.

"That's because Marcus tricked us." Rhys declared.

I was stunned. They too were shocked.

"Why do you think our marriage certificate was declared valid even after

she was bought?" He continued. "We were bonded by blood. And recently she has been drawing strength from me."

Lex scoffed. "I find that very hard to believe."

Rhys looked at the triplets, "Three of you have been trained to kill rogues on sight no matter who they are or what their circumstances are. Tell me. When Dawn screamed at Kaden, did you feel the aura of a rogue wolf?" He asked.

"No." They chorused. "It was dominance. Dominance like yours."

Lex's jaw fell open. "But-" he started.

"What Marcus did can not be broken until we part ways. We are unofficially marked and tethered to each other. Her wolf is obviously finding it very difficult to adjust to this change." Rhys cut in.

He tugged at the neckline of his shirt to expose a fading mark on his shoulder. "See." He said. "Hers is behind her ears."

Lex looked like he was going to faint. The rest of our audience looked relieved.

Rhys turned to the triplets, "Keep your eyes on her at all times. My dominance is too much for an omega wolf. She might exhibit something else."

"Yes, Alpha." They nodded.

"Now, for what I hope is the last time. Get her out of my sight. Kaden, we need to talk."

I was out the door in the wink of an eye. I wasn't ready to converse, much less, discuss what happened to me with anyone. It was too much to assimilate.

In my head, three words rang repeatedly. Rhys Kissed Me.

It had to be a joke.

"Wait up!" I heard Princess scream, but I couldn't stop. I sprinted to my room and locked the door behind me.

She knocked for a while and I screamed, "Just give me a moment or two to process what just happened. I think I'm going crazy."

That was the closest I could get to the truth. And I truly was going insane.