

03 | Whispers Of Him

The sun is starting to sink down, casting a dim light over the bare trees and white sparkling mountains. The air is cold, invigorating.

I walk along a snow dusted path leading out of our little village and into the woods nearby. Large trees, somehow still full with leaves, form a circle around the clearing.

Aimee is standing against the shadowy tree line. A group of girls, none of which I've ever bothered to have a conversation with, are surrounding her. Their voices are low, kept in hushed tones that only signal one thing: gossip.

I perk my ears, listening in.

"I hear he's ruthless. A monster who's wolf is three times the size of any other Alpha," a petite, bleach blonde— Mya— whispers, her eyes wide for emphasis.

Her brunette friend shudders before giving her input. "They say he's an absolute beast. He goes out commits mass murder whenever he feels like it!" Suddenly she lowers her voice even more and it turns shaky, "God, what if he comes here? Who knows where the hell he is right now."

They all exchange wide eyed glances, looking to gauge each other's reactions.

Who the hell are they talking about? And why are they so jittery?

As I approach, a stick snaps under my heel. All of them jump, including Aimee who has seemed fearless for as long as I've known her. Mya even lets out a choked scream.

All of their eyes turn on me as if I were the devil come to claim their souls. Their faces ghostly pale and their mouths are agape.

"Goddamn it, you can't do that!" Mya shrieks at me, her face turning into an accusatory stare. Something about her tone cuts right through me.

I narrow my eyes and push my lips into a snarky pucker. "If you're so scared then why don't you go choke on something besides fear?"

She sucks in a sharp breath, taken aback. Maybe it was a bit too far, but I can't say that I'm sorry. Nathan has already frayed my nerves for the day. Mya's mouth gapes like a fish out of water as she tries to find her words.

"You know what, fuck you," she spits before storming off. The other four girls follow her off, scowling at me as they go.

I brush it off and turn my attention back to my best friend. Aimee remains standing with her back towards the trees.

"What was that all about?" I ask, walking up to her and pointing a thumb back at the group.

She isn't phased by the little scene she just saw between me and Mya. At one point she tried to teach me how to keep my inner thoughts inside. Needless to say, she never did succeed. Now she doesn't even pay attention to my lack of a filter as she raises an eyebrow, her forehead wrinkling.

"You haven't heard?"

I shake my head, frowning my brow. I need to know what's going on. People gossip all the time, but never like this. Never with such fear.

"They call him the Exiled Alpha," she pauses in order to look up at the sky as it grows increasingly darker. "Shit, I have to go. I'm already running late."

Her sentences are rushed as she bends down to grab the strap of a purple backpack and heave it onto her back.

"Wait! What do you mean Exiled-"

Before I can finish she reaches out and grabs me firmly by the shoulders, looking me dead in the eye with such intensity that I feel paralyzed.

"Listen to me Adrienne," she squeezes my shoulders, speaking firmly, "I don't have time to explain right now, but just— don't go into the woods by yourself. I know you like to, but don't. Stay near the pack. You understand?"

I catch a chill running up my spine, one that's not caused by the cold. I can only think one thing in that moment, and it's what the fuck is out there?

I don't understand. I have no idea what she's talking about, only that whatever it is is dangerous. But I nod anyway.

This seems to be good enough for her because the next thing I know, she's pulling me into a hug.

"Stay safe, bitch," she says beside my ear. So much for her seriousness.

She lets me go and steps away. When she does she's wearing one of her signature ornery grins. Usually that gesture would comfort me, seeing her back to normal instead of spewing warnings at me. But it doesn't. Because her smile is half forced.

"Sorry I can't stay for the party. Looks like you'll get Nathan all to yourself," she teases sarcastically.

A pang of anger shocks my stomach and I open my mouth with intent of spitting profanities at her. But I bite my tongue as realization hits me.

She doesn't know.

She doesn't know about the blackmailed engagement or wedding. If she did, she would have told me. I know she would've. And she would've kicked Nathan's ass, regardless of the consequences.

I force an empty smile back to her, not quite as convincing as her own.

Let her have her fun, think, My problems aren't hers.

"Yeah whatever," I call back as she gets farther and farther away, "Just don't get aids."

She turns around just brief enough to stick her tongue out at me in a playful sneer.

I let out a heavy sigh when I turn around and start walking back. There are a couple people bustling about, a lot of them carrying various ribbons or decorations.

I walk past all of the working wolves, heading back to my room.

If Nathan or Andre either one expect me to prepare for the party of my own demise, then they're out of their minds. What could they possibly do to me? Sentence me to a lifetime of misery?

Oh wait...

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It's been three days since Aimee left. Three days that I've been locked in my room, trying anything to keep my mind off reality.

The only time any part of me left the room is when I stuck my head out the window to smoke, not wanting the smell to stick to the walls. The little glass ashtray on my desk is full and two empty cigarette packs lay in the trash can.

At least four times a day, one of the lower ranking members, a maid or a servant, would bring me food. My only guess is that this is Nathan's way of trying to suck up. Feigning sweetness in hopes that I won't act out during the ceremony.

What he doesn't know though, is that his pathetic attempt to win me over is in vain. I won't bend for that asshole no matter how much food he sends to me.

I hadn't even realized I was letting myself drift to sleep until a knock on the door stirs me awake.

Each time food was delivered, someone called out to me after knocking. No voice follows this one.

Now what is it? Let me guess, I have to plan the bridal shower?

They knock again, this time louder.

"I'm coming," I growl, untangling myself from the sheets. I stumble my way over to the door and open it.

Nathan is standing there, hands in his pockets and a polite smile on his face. "Well hey there, sleepy head," he chirps. His tone is so nice that I can almost feel the bile rising in my throat. "The party's starting in half an hour. So look your best. It is in our honor as the alpha."

I narrow my eyes and step back, looking him up and down. "Who the hell are you?"

He laughs, as if that were the funniest thing he'd ever heard. A cheerful sound, but also a fake one. "I just came to remind you," he says with an overly friendly tone before turning business-like, "Now do something with your hair, put on something expensive, and meet downstairs in ten minutes."

I don't move. Instead I stand like a statue, keeping my skeptical stare focused on him.

"Okay, look. As my chosen Luna, you have to have a look that makes everyone jealous of you on sight. Of course they'll already do that as long as you're on my arm, but still. I expect you to act like a perfect sweetheart, and if not... there will be consequences."

And just like that, the act is up. His conceited and bossy attitude is back in full swing, along with that pulsing vein in his neck. It always makes an appearance when he doesn't get his way.

I continue staring at him with dead eyes, knowing it would eventually make that nerve of his crack. If he intends to try and control my life— which he does— then he'll at least have to give me his reasoning.

"Why am I your chosen Luna?" I ask, suspicious. It doesn't make sense to me. We don't get along anymore, so why would he want to marry me? Against my will at that.

He smirks, meeting my eyes with a devious gleam of his own. "You're mouthy, Adrienne Gage. A sharp tongue and a clever head. That's what people can't see until it's already too late."

He moves closer, licking my chin with his thumb. With less than an inch between our cheeks, his hot breath fans over my eyes... They're so cold. So unpredictable. So... unreadable.

He swipes his thumb across my jaw as he steps away, turning and leaving just like that. "Remember," he calls, his voice echoing in the dark hallway, "Ten minutes."

My fingers raise to touch where he did. I rub the skin until it starts to burn. I'm quite certain I've rubbed it raw with my palm, yet it still doesn't feel clean.

So that's his reason.

He plans to use me as his pawn.

But I'll be damned if I help him win whatever chess game he thinks he's playing.

With Alpha Andre's threat in mind, I close the door and get to work on myself reluctantly. If only I had a fashion savvy best friend like all the movies portray, then this would be a lot easier.

The cruel thing is that I do; except she's miles away, partying her ass off in another pack.

At least one of us is having a good time.

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Sorry for the late update! Hope you guys like it. I've decided to try to post every Friday and maybe Tuesdays.

Thanks for reading!!

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