

## Chapter 0011

Grace

My mind was reeling, but as Devin sputtered, I found that I couldn't do much more than sit back and watch. Amy looked nervously at me before looking back at Charles. She drew closer as if to lean on Devin, but he didn't seem to notice.

"What?" Devin shook his head, disbelief painting his face.

"I believe that my relationship with your ex-wife is the least of your problems," Charles said and narrowed his eyes. "You've been rude enough to mock the mother of your children. Will you not introduce your mate to me?"

Devin flushed. The tone Charles had used felt paternal and stern, but there was something else in his voice. Anger.

"I-It's not—"

"Introduce her properly, Devin," Charles said in a biting tone. "You've already tried my patience for a lifetime."

Devin cleared his throat and bowed his head a little before nudging Amy closer to the table.

"This is Amy Greenvalley, my fated mate. Amy, this is my chief, His Majesty, Charles Blackwoods."

I frowned, watching the moment. It felt ceremonial. Werewolves didn't have anything like this. We didn't even treat our President like this. The anger and ferocity on Charles' face melted away. Amy looked like she was going to collapse out of terror or run away as he turned his gaze on her. Then, she went still. His eyes were so kind, tender even, paternal as he stood and approached her gently. He passed his hand gently over her forehead. Her eyes widened as she gasped. Her eyes welled up with tears then they fluttered closed as he cupped her face gently and bent to place a kiss on her forehead. She whimpered.

"I welcome you," he whispered gently. "You are of the Blackwoods Clan in all but name."

He pressed her hand to her stomach. "And soon to be blood."

Her jaw wobbled, and she bowed her head. "T-Thank you for your blessing and protection, Your Majesty."

He smiled as she retreated a few steps to stand with Devin. Then, he turned his gaze onto Devin, narrowing his gaze at him.

"Devin, it's been a while since you've had the grace to speak to me," he began, looking straight at Devin. The words hung heavy in the air and Devin flinched. "News had reached me of your status through television—"

"I—"

"Quiet."

My heart lurched and Devin paled, ducking his head again.

"And your actions are appalling. As a ward of the Blackwoods Clan, as the child I have claimed as my own, you have disgraced me in word and deed. To mock your former wife and leave her, your children, and her pack in the way you have is not what I have raised you to do." He glanced at Amy. "To flaunt your oath-breaking and misconduct on television for the world to see, to expose your mate and eventually your children to such a thing, is disgusting. What have you to say for yourself?"

Devin said nothing. Amy whimpered softly, slipping her hand into Devin's and clinging to it as if it were her lifeline.

"Well, Devin?"

"I..." Devine cleared his throat. "It's not oath-breaking—"

Charles turned his gaze to Amy. "When is your baby due, Amy?"

"I-In a few months," she replied, her voice barely a whisper.

His eyes narrowed. "You were not released from your marriage vows until a few days ago. How could it be anything but oath-breaking? Adultery?"

"The mate bond—"

"Inclines you. It does not oblige you. You are not controlled by your passions. You could have ended your marriage when you found Amy. You could have been honorable in how you managed the pack, yet you abused Alpha Wolfe's trust and love. You have endangered the well-being of your children and countless lives because of your selfishness, and placed your mate in a precarious position." Charles took a deep breath. "It pains me to see the man you have become as if I had not given you every moral lesson and all proper guidance. It pains me to think of what your parents would think of you now. Yet, the law is the law."

I looked between the two of them as Devin's head jerked up.

"But—"

"To show you leniency would be to insult every Lycan King before me and after me. You know this." He looked at Amy. "Amy Greenvalley, by our laws, you will be implicated. However, given your status, your sentence, should it be necessary, will be lessened."

She whimpered.

"You may speak, Amy," he said softly.

"I-I... I didn't... I... Your Majesty..."

"You didn't know that he was married." She shook her head. "Nor that he had children?"

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