

## Chapter 0012

She shook her head again. He nodded. “I imagined as such. You are soon to be a Blackwoods by blood and oath, Amy. You have nothing to fear.”

He turned his gaze back to Devin. “The lawyers will be in touch, Devin. If you have any shred of honor left in you, you will cooperate and perhaps reclaim some measure of esteem in my eyes. It should take a few months to complete the investigation, by then, I expect you will have found gainful employment to provide for your mate and your children.”

Devin’s jaw dropped. “You can’t be serious.”

“You knew what you were doing when you didn’t even mention your children by Alpha Wolfe. What little remains in your accounts has been frozen already while the lawyers begin a tally. Based on what has already been provided, you will owe Alpha Wolfe at minimum six thousand a month until both children come to be of age under lycan law, and that is before the sabotage charges are fully investigated.”

Amy’s face turned a shade paler. Her eyes widened in shock.

“That can’t be true. She’s—Dad, whatever she’s told you isn’t true. I didn’t—”

“You didn’t?” Charles asked, glaring at him. “You didn’t make it so your ex-wife’s family home, the home where your children live, will be taken from them? You didn’t run her family’s company essentially into the ground to feed your need to live lavishly?”

Devin’s mouth opened and closed like a fish.

He looked back at Amy. “As I said before, Amy, you need not worry. The Blackwoods Clan has never allowed innocents to suffer.”

“You can’t be serious, Dad. You’re just going to leave me with nothing? What about my inheritance?”

“You squandered it long before you married Alpha Wolfe.” His eyes narrowed. “I suspect that is precisely what drove you to ruin her company and pack’s finances.”

Devin hissed, flushing. “My parents’ lives are priceless. You think what was in that account can ever make up for their loss? You think it was enough? If you really felt remorse, then you wouldn’t even be talking about laws or punishment, considering everything you’ve let happen.”

At this, Charles’ face darkened. His eyes glinted a furious, bloody red. Amy stepped back, nearly bowing at her waist with a whimper. Devin trembled and stepped back too.

“Leave, Devin,” Charles said, his voice a low rumble in his chest. “Before I say or do something that would make me an oath-breaker.”

“But—”

“You should stop wasting your time attempting to convince me you are worth my leniency and begin searching for a job. While you are unlikely to find a decent job at a lycan company once the charges of abandoning your pups are on the books, there are other opportunities in the world. Perhaps a werewolf company will hire you for the sheer pleasure of having a lycan on the lowest rungs of their business.”

“You’re not going to help me?”

“You well know that the lycan way is to use what strength you have to make your own way. You may be a gamma but are not helpless.” Charles lifted his chin, his eyes still glowing. “As a ward of the royal line, you have been given every opportunity and tool imaginable. I would suggest you get to work.”

Amy gasped. My eyes widened as I stared at Devin. He turned bright red. Amy looked as surprised as I was. Devin had always claimed to be an alpha lycan, meaning he was physically of the highest echelon of Lycans. To hear that he was just a step above an omega lycan, which was essentially the most defenseless class of lycan, weaker than werewolves in some ways, should have been shocking, but as I thought about it, I almost smiled.

It made so much sense. The way he nudged and wore me down. He didn’t have any strength, but he made himself feel powerful by making me feel lesser. I was furious with him, but even more so with myself. How had I let a gamma lycan diminish me so much?

“We’re leaving,” Devin said firmly, taking Amy with him as he left the area. It didn’t look like they were headed toward a table. I watched Charles’ shoulders relax a little as they vanished from view, then my phone chimed. I opened the text message and winced.

It was from the utility company telling me that my electricity had been turned off due to a lack of payment.

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