

## Chapter 0013

Grace

Charles returned to the table. Though his expression smoothed out into something that was supposed to be welcoming and calm, his eyes were still glowing. He was furious and trying to hide it.

"My apologies, Grace. I thought I raised him better, but I promise that he will suffer for his actions."

I licked my lips. I wanted to ask more about that whole exchange, but I tightened my grip on my phone and pushed those thoughts away. His gaze darted to my clenched hand and then back to my face.

"... You were saying you had a proposal."

"It's perfectly all right to want to ask questions."

I shook my head. "Whatever that was, all of it, has nothing to do with me."

I didn't have time to think about why he would call me Devin's future stepmother. I didn't have time to think about it or how it made my stomach flutter to think about the way he said it.

He opened his mouth as if he wanted to say something but closed it and nodded. He reached down. I heard the click of

a briefcase before he lifted a package of papers onto the table.

"Before my proposal, a gesture of goodwill."

I glanced at the package, and he nodded at it. I pulled it across the table and opened it.

Deed in Perpetuum.

My heart raced, pounding at my chest as I pulled the pages out. The first page left me speechless. My eyes were burning. It was the deed to the Wolfe family house, Mooncrest's pack house. He'd secured it through the Inter-Species Federal Bank so that it could never be used as collateral in the future.

And he's put the deed solely in my name and the name of the alpha of the Mooncrest pack.

I felt my throat swelling even as I tried to hold back the tears of relief.

The pages behind it were all documents related to the payment, in full, of every loan that had the house as collateral. We weren't going to be homeless, and maybe Devin would be forced to pay me for everything he's done, but that wouldn't do anything for me being broke today.

Still, the relief made me press the package to my chest. Maybe I looked weak, but it was obvious that he knew everything I was going through already.

"Grace?"

"I'm listening," I whispered.

He hesitated before he began, and I couldn't bear to look at him.

"I'd like to invest in Wolfe Medical," he said. "I know that investments are pretty rare between our races, with the Ordnances and lingering resentments, but under the circumstances and what Wolfe Medical stands to achieve, I am here to offer this."

My jaw trembled. I glanced up at him. "You already basically own...."

Everything. He grimaced.

"Again, I hadn't... planned to open with that. Nor had it been my intention from the start. I only found out about Wolfe Medical and Mooncrest's financial state on Monday."

My lips twitched at the irony. He'd found out the same day I did.

"You... planned to meet with me before that though. My assistant said that Sharpe had been trying to get a meeting with me for a while."

His lips twitched. "I only became majority owner of Sharpe on Monday as well."

I swallowed. "And the bar?"

"You were a beautiful woman who stirred every instinct I had." I met his gaze, searching for the lie, but his eyes were steady. "And you still do."

I tore my gaze away before he could draw me in completely.

"You said an investor. What did you have in mind?" I eyed him. "And the rest of our debts? Are you going to call them due?"

He chuckled. "No. Your pack's autonomy is important to me. Politically and personally. I know what it is to bear the weight of a great legacy, and your father's legacy was certainly that."

I swallowed, tightening my grip on the package.

"What do you get out of this?"

He smiled. "Victory."

I narrowed my eyes.

"Business is... a game for me. I win the more I make money. Your longevity drug has the potential to be the most lucrative thing in the world quickly with the capital to get it to market and proper management."

I swallowed. He wasn't just flattering me and my family's company. Wolfe Medical had always been at the forefront of medicine, and as far as I knew we were the only company looking into the longevity of werewolves. While we healed

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quickly, we didn't live long. The oldest werewolf recorded had died at seventy-three, but the average was about sixty years old. The drug Wolfe Medical had developed would make werewolves live ten to twenty years longer, but it was a long road between development and the market. A very long and expensive road.

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