

Fated out Chapter 96

96 Guilt–tripping grief...

Lyla

It was nearly dusk when I arrived at the pack house and the first time I would be going home since I arrived at Blue Ridge.

I hesitated at the door, taking in a deep breath. I didn't know what to expect from my mother.

Did she hate me less now?

I glanced over my shoulder at the two pack warriors Beta Jeremy had insisted I come with, their presence felt comforting alright but I knew I had to face whatever was waiting for me inside the house. *w@w.n0v#lwór@.Cóm*

“Wait here, I managed to say to them. “I won’t be long”

They nodded quietly and stood to one side of the terrace. I took another deep breath again before knocking. After a few seconds, the heavy door creaked open revealing one of the pack

servants.

It was our housekeeper.

As soon as she saw me, she opened the door wider and bowed her head in greeting. “Miss Lyla.”

“Good evening. I flashed her an uneasy smile looking past her shoulders. “Are my mother and my sister around?”

“Miss Clarissa went for a walk around the Packhouse to clear her head, while your mother is resting in the bedroom. Should I tell her you’re here?”

“No!” I said quickly, feeling relieved somewhat. “Let’s not disturb her. I only came to get an important thing for my dad’s funeral and will be out in no time.”

I entered the house, stopping to respond to the greetings of the few domestic staff who passed by or were working silently in the background. The atmosphere in the house felt depressing. Everyone I passed had a sombre look on their face. They were all mourning for my father.

To everyone, he was a good man... except for me. *Ww@.nó@elwστ@.CεMl*

I made my way through the hallway, trying not to get overwhelmed by the memories that rushed to my mind. My father sitting in his favourite chair in the sitting room, barking orders at m Family dinners that revolved around their perfect daughter Clarissa and more complaints about me... the scent of his cologne still clung faintly to the air.

Focus, I reminded myself. Just get suitable clothes for the funeral and leave. I repeated the mantra in my head, heading for the stairs that led to the master bedroom. I wasn’t here to wallow in memories or to mourn; I’d done that enough already... in my own way.

As I approached the master bedroom, I noticed the door was slightly ajar, which was unusual. Just as I reached out to push it open, a sound froze my steps – soft chuckling, almost delirious drifted from within to my ears. My breath caught in my throat as I slowly peered inside.

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The bedroom seemed empty.

Deciding I may just be hearing things, I entered the bedroom this time and was about to walk in the direction of the closet when the soft, almost muffled chuckling reached my ears again. Startled, I decided to find out what it was.

Following the direction where the sound had come from, I got to the other side of the massive bed and gasped slightly when I saw my mother sitting on the ground, crossed–legged, flipping through a photo album spread across her lap.

Her fingers traced the photos as she flipped through the pages, pausing every so often to laugh or make one weird noise, though it sounded more like a pained release than true laughter. Her cheeks were streaked with dried tears and her eyes were swollen and red from crying. I've heard that losing your mate- the pain, was worse than rejection and as someone who had experienced what it means to be rejected, I had an idea of how my mother felt right now.

As if sensing my presence, she finally looked up and immediately the chuckling ceased and her gaze shifted from nostalgia to pure hatred that made me involuntarily take a step back.

"I... I just came to get something suitable for Dad... for his burial." I stammered, with a trembling voice.

She said nothing. She merely closed the photo album with a deliberate slowness that felt like she was contemplating harming me before attempting to stand. She groaned as she tried to stand with her heavily pregnant form.

Instinctively, I stepped forward to help but a sharp glare from her made me recoil. Reaching for the bedpost instead, she pulled herself up, panting. Then she walked past me taking the photo album with her.

"Mom, please, I followed after her still keeping my distance. “Can we talk? I'm sorry... please just tell me how to fix it, I promise I'll do anything"

But she ignored me and continued walking to the door. I followed her with my gaze fighting the tears that pooled at the corner of my eyes. As she reached the doorway, I noticed Clarissa was standing there.

My mother passed by without saying a word to her. I quickly looked away, hoping to hide the tears in my eyes but Clarissa entered the room anyway. She didn't say anything to me at first. She just walked around the room slowly, her fingers brushing against father's belongings – his reading glasses on the nightstand, the watch he always forgot to wear, his favourite sweater draped over a chair.

Finally, she sank onto the bed, running a hand over the quilt on it.

“This is the first time I've been here, she said softly, tears gathering in her eyes. “Since... since father..." she couldn't finish the sentence, but she didn't need to.

I crossed the room and sat down beside her, and for a moment, we sat in silence.

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She lost her mate, her best friend plus carrying a baby doesn't make it easier. The pack healers. say that she's in deep grief – it's hitting her harder than anyone expected and they said it'll take time, but she'll come back to us eventually.

I bit my lip, lowering my gaze to the floor and nodded. “I just..." I struggled, finding the words.

almost painful to say aloud. “I wanted to help her, but it's like she doesn't want to do

with me.”

anything

Clarissa didn't say anything. After a few more seconds of silence, she pointed to the rocking chair in the corner of the bedroom. “Remember how father used to read to us here?” she laughed. “Every morning before he goes to the office he'd do all the different voices for each

character.”

I smiled, my heart swelling at the memory. That was before I started getting my heat. “Or when he'd chase us around the yard, pretending to be some rogue wolf.”

Clarissa nodded, as a tear rolled down her cheek now. “He was a good father, Lyla... to both of us. I know..." she took a deep breath. “I know it got rocky for you at some point but he didn't stop loving you in the end. When they took him to the pack hospital at the White Mountains... before his surgery... he had a brave smile on his face and he demanded to see you.”

I was familiar with the guilt–tripping that came with

wasn't interested even if our father suddenly start ef. I didn't know how to tell Clarissa that I *@w.w.no@()e)ℓ@DRL.com*

to accept that he asked for me on his sick bed.

loving me before he died. I was too broken

I didn't care at all. I was only here out of duty and not obligation.

“Would

you

like my

my help?” she asked suddenly, wiping the tears from her cheeks. “To help you

choose suitable clothes for dad. I have an idea what his favourite might

be." *wW.W.noVE@Wεtm.co™*

I nodded with a small smile. “Sure!”