

## Chapter 22

KADE

I never once imagined that my eyes would ever see Selene's realm. I knew that she mentioned that Elle would get to see Grant, and Gabriel mentioned that Elle was brought here before, but never had it occurred to me that I would get the opportunity to as well.

This realm was an odd experience but in the best of way. My heart and soul felt at peace here as if the problems of life could not touch us within these borders. That was until she said that we needed to discuss things that would impact the future.

"Let us start with you Elle. You have a decision to make regarding Alpha Andrew," Selene began.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

Elle's head tilted, and a cute little furrow settled between her brows. My mate was everything from adorable to sexy and back again. I had come to realize that her features were very expressive if she was not hiding it. She could entirely wipe expression off her appearance if she wanted to just like how she did when facing the Alpha family at dinner that night.

"You were correct to assume that he knew of your destiny.

He knew which pack you were from and hired men to bring you to him. He is the only one at Blue Crest who does know, but he would never willingly give you that information. I cannot supply it or else the future will change and not for the better. He will agree to a trade though. You could either execute him for all that he has done, or his title can be stripped before he is exiled. It is well within your right to choose the first option. However, the second option leads you down a path which unites your past with your present. It also leads Gabriel to his mate. However, Alpha Andrew is not a forgiving man, and you will face hardship. Like I told you already, this is your decision, and your decision alone.”

Elle’s lower lip was firmly wedged between her teeth as she thought. I could see how this decision could have far reaching implications, so it was not one to make lightly.

If it were up to me, aside from Gabriel finding his mate, I would sentence him to death for all of the bullshit he allowed to happen. For all the bullshit he pulled with my mate. I was also not a forgiving man, and he was on the shortlist for execution in my book.

“Will any of our people die or be hurt if he is exiled?” she asked Selene.

Elle’s eyes took in all of Selene’s features as she waited for the answer. Said answer would be the deciding factor for her.

“Your people will be safe.”

“That’s what I choose then because Gabriel has done everything for me in life. He was there for me when they wanted nothing more than to destroy me. He deserves his happiness and completion,” Elle explained, leaning into me as she said that.

I dropped a kiss to the top of her head because I was not surprised at all that she would choose that option. I would have as well, but she did not even have to consider it once she knew that our people would be safe.

I clearly caught the fact that Selene was careful in her answer. It was possibly just my own angst of keeping my mate safe that my mind automatically went to the fact that Selene did not say that we would all be safe. Just that Elle’s people would be safe. I would do whatever was necessary to keep her safe though. I refused to lose her.

My mate continued to amaze me. She was willing to take anything on in order for those she loved to be taken care of. Gabriel was a great guy, and someone I could easily see myself calling a friend. He deserved his happiness just like my mate mentioned.

“I figured that you would be your choice,” Selene said, smiling fondly at her. “Now, let us move onto you Kade. Elle will die if you take her to your pack right now.”

I anticipated many things that she might want to discuss, but that was not one I had even contemplated. Our pack

would protect her with their lives as seen by how they all rallied together to find her.

"What do you mean?" I asked as I tried and failed to figure it out myself.

"I insisted on your tour for more than just finding her. You were being pushed to take a chosen mate. Why is that?" she asked.

"To strengthen the pack, but they backed off..." I trailed off as I thought harder about it. I was trying to pinpoint what she was getting at, but it seemed like it was just out of reach.

Selene watched me patiently as I was failing to come up with the answers on my own. It was like she able to see my internal struggle.

"They backed off but not unanimously. There was a single person who was adamant that you needed a chosen mate. That person was pressing down hard too and had already chosen the she-wolf that he wanted by your side. Elle will not be safe there until he is taken out of the equation. The she-wolf will be problematic but will only present herself once Elle is there. Just stay vigilant, and you both will be fine."

My mind was reeling with Selene's information. One of our pack's Elders could not be trusted and would kill my mate if given the opportunity. Hell no. That would never happen.

Nobody would touch her ever again. I would protect her with everything inside of me.


"You will protect her, Kade. That is why I am speaking to you both now," she said patiently.

Oh, right. She could see into the hearts and minds of her creations. Selene moved over and placed her hand over the top of mine. Warmth spread from her hand to mine, and my mind and heart immediately calmed down by being within her presence. Then I was able to think clearly again.

"I would suggest that you call them all out to Blue Crest to get them away from the pack as well. This person is not only a danger to Elle but also a danger to the pack because they have been sharing information about your pack with outsiders by finding the one way around your Alpha command. When it comes to Elle, you must not share anything about her destiny or lineage. Both would make her a prime target. Those who already know will protect that knowledge, so do not worry about that."

It would not be too difficult to get them out here given the circumstances surrounding what happened. We could come up with a cover story and stroke their egos a bit in order to make it seem like we needed their guidance.

We had five Elders. There were two females and three males. The two females were in the clear, but that left three others who could potentially be the traitor. Once they were here then Apollo and I could easily figure it out.



The Elders of our pack were an integral part of our leadership. That pissed me off more than anything else because the traitor was sitting at our table for no telling how long. Three of our Elders were left over from my father's reign as Alpha, and the other two were placed there when I took over since the previous two died in the same attack that claimed my father.

"Thank you, Selene. I had no idea that we even had a traitor. Is it only this one that we need to worry about regarding the pack?" I asked.

Her lips pursed as she thought about her response. It was clear that there were some things that she could and could not say. I could not begin to imagine how difficult it would be to know things but have to decide how much information was appropriate to give out.

"That I cannot say. However, Elle has strong intuition. That is what helped her figure out who was all culpable in the pack. Rely on each other because something special will happen once your bond is complete. You saw what Gabriel and Elle's bond was capable of earlier. Your bond with Elle does something entirely different. You will amplify each other's abilities. I will not give the rest away because you will see in time."

There was a lot of new information tossed at us, but I was incredibly grateful for this help because I could not let anything happen to her. I almost lost her twice already. The

first time was when she was kidnapped, and the second time was when she would not wake up.

Selene motioned for us both to stand up. She cupped my cheeks and looked into my eyes before she pressed a kiss to my forehead. Immeasurable warmth encased my entire body, starting with my forehead and moving to cover every inch. My eyes blazed with golden shimmers, and I could feel Tyre's aura expanding.

"Tyre has always been one of my favorite wolf spirits. His aura has always been very strong, but it is now divinely blessed. Others will not be able to sense the blessing at all, but it will significantly increase the strength of the aura."

"Thank you," Tyre said through me.

He pulled himself back and laid down. He was basking in her presence. It was a huge honor for a shifter to be in her presence at all, but it was even more special for the wolf.

"You are more than welcome. Kade, speak to your grandfather about 'prophetia virtutis dantis.' That has significance for both of you as to how Alpha Andrew knew anything about Elle's destiny. I must send you back, but I do love you both," she said before embracing her one last time.

It took me a moment for my body to orient itself once my eyes popped open. We were still in the hospital, but I knew that it was not just a dream. That was real. I had been in her realm, speaking to her, seeing her, and being embraced by

her.

I looked down at my amazing mate and pressed a kiss to the top of her head. Her beautiful blues peered up at me with many emotions swirling around in them. She propped her body up on her elbow to bring herself closer to my eyelevel.

“Is this what you want? This is your choice, Kade. I would never take that away from you. Being my mate comes with extenuating circumstances apparently.” Her voice was soft but resolute.

It was something I appreciated about her. She believed in free will and choice. She cared enough about me already to care about what I truly wanted. If I told her that I could not do this, then she would accept it. She was used to people taking what they wanted from her, but she refused to do the same.

I lowered my head until my lips were a breadth away from hers. There was no question that I wanted her. She was my future, my completion, and my desire. Elle was everything I wanted and more.

“I want you, darling. You were mine from the moment I caught your scent. Our mateship is a blessing, and I couldn’t imagine anyone else to stand beside in life. What about you? What do you want?” I asked her, trailing my thumb down her neck and enjoying the goosebumps that spread over her skin in response.



"I want you and Tyre. My past was void of you two, and I was incomplete. You were mine from the moment that I smelled your cinnamon espresso scent," she murmured as her lips brushed against mine.

Her hand fisted my shirt, holding on for dear life as her lips pressed against mine possessively. I let her take control of the kiss as her tongue swept over my bottom lip. My mouth opened up for her exploration. Elle was new to kissing, but her tongue battled against mine with tantalizing determination. My mate was a great kisser, and I was glad that I was her first kiss. I wished that she could have been the same for me, but I could not erase my past.

Her moan snapped me back to the reality of where we were, so I pulled back and pressed a soft kiss to her lips. Her eyes were dazed, and I felt like a smug bastard for doing that to her.

"Unfortunately, this room isn't private enough to take this further." I leaned down to her ear and whispered, "the first time that I take you will require plenty of uninterrupted time because I'll explore every inch of you, so I'll need time to worship the body of my mate. I'll be able to focus on bringing you pleasure the next time I see you naked."

Her face blushed with my words. She had not realized until now that I had to shower her. It was not my intention to embarrass her or anything.



"You have nothing to blush for, darling. I had to wash the wolfsbane off. Next time I'll take time to appreciate it, and you'll be able to see what your gorgeous body does to mine," I said, nipping her neck.

"Not fair. You owe me a viewing of your body we're freed from this room," she informed me with a groan. 1

I chuckled because I would certainly do that for her. I knew that she was afraid that I would have an issue with all of her scars, but I did not. Her body was one of a true warrior. Her enemies tried to destroy her, but she overcame them each and every time. They could not strike her dead. Yes, there were scars, but they were badges of honor and survival. They should be worn with pride instead of shame.

I wanted to show her exactly what her body did to mine. She would see how easily my cock responded to her. There would be no mistaking the truth then.

It was a little after 7:00 A.M. when I pulled my phone out and called Thompson. It was early, but it was imperative that we spoke with them as soon as possible. 1

He answered, so I told him that the Council needed to come to Elle's hospital room because we had some potentially dangerous news relayed by Selene. They were currently staying within the pack while we got everything sorted out, so it did not take more than thirty minutes before there was a knock and the five Council members spilled into the room.

Everyone looked happy to see that Elle was fully awake and aware now. They all held onto guilt about what happened even though they should not. We all underestimated Alpha Andrew, but we never would again.

"I'm sorry for bringing you in so early, but Elle and I were brought to the Goddess' realm while we slept. One of Nightshade's Elders is a traitor," I began.

I watched them closely as Elle and I told them about the Elder and the she-wolf. They agreed that we should take care of the people here and send for the Elders to come help out this evening.

They were angry when it came to knowing that the Elder betrayed the pack and would be willingly to murder my mate just to force me into taking a chosen mate. They found it just as despicable as we did.

They were also pissed that the Elder betrayed the pack to outsiders. That was very problematic because we did not know who he had been in contact with or what they knew. The Council sent the gifted wolves to us because they were safe there. This Elder had a lot to answer for starting with how he got around my Alpha command.

The Elder would be executed for his treasonous acts. However, what type of death he would receive depended on how helpful he was to us. He betrayed my people, and I would not rest until they were safe again.

“You five know the truth of who and what Elle is. We implicitly trust you, and so does the Goddess who was the one who had me tell you everything about Elle. She also mentioned that the knowledge was safe with those who currently knew. Elle’s destiny benefits not just our pack but our kind as a whole. There’s no way to know what that’ll look like yet, but I think it’ll be good to have a closer relationship with you all beyond just offering sanctuary to the gifted wolves. This will be even more important while I try to figure out how to counterbalance the scales between everything.”

The five of them nodded to that. At least it was not just on me for feeling that way. It was a relief that they did as well. It would be fantastic if we knew what the future held, but time would tell.

“We’ve always respected you greatly and look forward to this. Let us know whatever we can do to help out,” Diego said.

“I’ve always really respected all of you as well,” I told him sincerely.

“What do we do with Eric though? He’s technically human now,” Elle pointed out.

Hers was a question that I had as well since humans were not my territory. I looked towards the Council to see what they decided. This was their jurisdiction after all. Humans

were not a territory that most shifters dealt with. I was certain that they had to punish humans over the years.

"What do you think, Elle? You suffered the most from his actions," Thompson pointed out.

She nodded in understanding and closed her eyes to think. Her hand sought mine out, so I comforted her as much as possible by rubbing her skin with my thumb.

I did not know everything the bastard did, but I knew enough to want him dead. There was no way for me to ever understand the depths of how she felt about this.

"He didn't do all of this because he was a shifter. He hurt more people than just me, and I honestly worry that it'll get worse now that Grant is gone. He didn't listen to his voice of reason, but Grant was still that voice. Let me explain something so that you understand where I'm coming from before I suggest anything. Six years ago, there was a set of bubbly five-year-old Omega twins that had just joined the pack. The twins went missing, never to be seen again, but the last person that had interaction with them was Eric. It was a few months before Grant came into the picture, so Grant never knew what happened."

She swallowed hard as she looked around at all of us. It was easy to see how much this still affected her. Eric was the demon that nobody could vanquish but was allowed to destroy anything that he wanted to.

“He can’t be allowed to live in my opinion. I have a binder that has every offense I’ve ever found against him, including my own, and will turn it over to you so that you can make the determination. I just worry about what else he might do,” she said.

She hesitantly looked around as if she was worried about their reaction to her suggestion, but they all nodded. They saw what we all had. He was a monstrous bastard. Most of this pack was.

“Then he won’t be. We trust your opinion on these things. We also trust that you would never condemn someone without proof. We learned as much about you since Kade called us that you were missing. Your people sing praises of your character,” Thompson explained.

Thompson’s words caused a beautiful blush to dot her cheeks. Goddess, she was beautiful.

“What about the Alpha and Luna?” Diego asked.

Elle and I exchanged a look. I had no idea about the Luna, but we already figured out what needed to happen to the Alpha.

“Alpha Andrew has information about where I’m from that he’ll only offer up if I allow him to live, according to the Goddess, but still with being exiled and his title stripped. Luna, however, is just as sadistic as her son. She’s known for many things, but one of them being infanticide on two

separate occasions and the encouragement of what the warriors did to my people. By encouragement I mean holding them down while her warriors did whatever they wanted or even drugging the men, women, and teens. She has her own section in the binder.”

Growls ripped from all of us with that bit of information. What the fuck was wrong with this pack? This was absolutely disgusting. I had never heard of another pack this bad before, but I knew there were others out there. There had to be something that we could do.

“How did we never know about any of this?” Thompson asked his fellow Alphas. They all looked like they were trying to figure out the answer to that themselves.

“It’s nothing to do with you,” she said softly. “Up until Kade came along, they only invited corrupt packs. I don’t know why he invited Nightshade, but I would venture a guess that it was some divine intervention. Alpha Andrew incentivized those Alphas to keep it quiet by giving them ‘perks’ as he called it. None of us even knew that the Council existed or else I would’ve reached out long ago.”

The doctor knocked on the door to check Elle and see if she was ready to be discharged.

The Council told us that their warriors would take us back to the house whenever she was ready. They needed to check on a few things but would be in touch.