

Alpha Lucian's Fiery Luna

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Athena slowly opened her eyes, and a faint light flickered above her, breaking through the shadows. Her lashes trembled as she blinked slowly, trying to focus.

Her vision blurred again as a sharp, stabbing pain erupted throughout her body as if every muscle had been shredded and stitched back together.

The ceiling came into view, and the walls were painted in ashen grays and aged wood. The scent of herbs and smoke clung to the air, grounding her senses.

She had no idea how long she had been out. Minutes? Hours? Days? Time had become meaningless.

Instinctively, she pushed herself up from the bed.

"Argh!" she cried out in pain, clutching her side. A searing agony like dozens of tiny knives stabbed at her ribs, forcing her to grit her teeth.

"Easy." A cold yet concerned voice echoed across the room. "You're not healed yet."

Startled, Athena turned toward the source of the voice.

A tall man stood a few feet from the bed. His eyes were sharp and calculating, the kind of gaze that stripped you bare without touching you. Authority clung to him like a second skin as he stepped out from a chair.

She swallowed hard.

There was something about him, something magnetic. It wasn't fear she felt... but a strange pull. It was as if part of her wanted to run toward him while the other screamed to get away.

"W-who are you?" she asked warily, trying to sound strong even as her fingers trembled against the sheets.

The man, Alpha Lucian, looked at her with an unreadable expression. For days, he had been silently observing her unconscious form, and now that she was awake, he couldn't stop himself from watching her more closely.

"What were you doing in my territory?" he asked, voice low and laced with suspicion.

Athena's eyes narrowed at the question. The woods. The two werewolves. The black wolf's face was close to hers.

Her body stiffened.

"None of your business," she snapped, looking away in irritation. Athena didn't know why, but something about him made her refuse to show weakness even in her vulnerable state.

Lucian's jaw clenched. A muscle twitches. His eyes burned with anger, curiosity, and something else he didn't dare name.

'Damn it. Don't stop me. Can't you hear her? That fire in her voice... She deserves to be punished,' he growled inwardly, wrestling with his wolf.

'She's our mate, you idiot.' His wolf's voice was calmer but firm, echoing in his head like thunder in the distance.

'Mate? Really? Look at her. No sign of recognition. That's not how a mate reacts. She doesn't feel the bond. She doesn't even know who I am.'

'Something must have happened to her wolf, so she can't recognize us,' his wolf replied.

"Hey!" Athena suddenly yelled, snapping Alpha Lucian out of the silent argument with his wolf. "Where the hell am I, and who the hell are you?!"

Lucian's eyes narrowed dangerously. He wasn't used to being shouted at, especially not by someone who clearly had no idea who he was.

He took a deep breath, forcing down the alpha dominance that begged to rise. Should he tell her the truth now? Or wait? Was she a friend or foe?

Before he could answer, a loud knock sounded, and the door opened without waiting for permission.

"Alpha Lucian, I heard you brought a woman."

Athena and Lucian turned toward the innocent-looking woman with a scared female omega behind her.

"I'm sorry, Alpha. I tried to stop Luna, but she didn't listen," said the omega.

"Speak," Lucian ordered coldly, referring to the woman called Luna. His voice was no longer calm but cutting, every syllable laced with restrained fury. Still, he averted his gaze from Athena.

"Why did you bring a woman here, not just a woman but a rogue! What if she was sent by the Crimson Pack as a spy?" the Luna replied hesitantly.

Athena wanted to say something, but she smelled something from the Luna. Then she looked at Alpha Lucian, and realized that it was his scent lingered on the woman that just got in, making her feel angry for no reason.

"Who are you to question me?" he growled.

"Alpha, I was just--"

"I don't want anyone to question my decision, especially from a woman. Am I clear?"

"Yes, Alpha," Luna replied with a slight bow accompanied by fear. Her eyes flicked to Athena, and she instantly felt angry, seeing her as a competition.

Lucian turned back to her, face hardening. "Tell me, are you a spy from the Crimson Pack?"

Athena's breath hitched.

"What? No! I don't even know who they are! I've never heard of them until now!"

Lucian studied her, trying to sense a lie. But all he saw was the confusion and fear she was trying to hide.

But he still didn't trust her. He didn't believe Athena because everyone in their region knew the Crimson Pack. And her being a woman added to his suspicion.

A woman's betrayal destroyed his father and led to the fall of his former pack, the Crimson Pack. The same pack he now considered his mortal enemy.

To Alpha Lucian, women had no place in battle. They were meant to clean, tend to the pack house, bear children, and serve their mates. Nothing more.

He believed that if given the chance, a woman would only betray him again.

Athena, however, was different. She didn't cower. She didn't submit because of what she had experienced in the Ravenclaw Pack. And worst of all, she didn't even seem to recognize their sacred bond.

And that, perhaps, was the most dangerous thing of all.

"Do you know who I am to you?" Lucian asked, meeting Athena's gaze. He didn't want to miss her reaction. By doing that, he would know whether she was telling the truth or not.

'She better knows us, Lucian. She's ours, and I want us to claim her,' his wolf said.

'Let's see about that. But don't get your hopes up. Judging from how she looks at me, I clearly see she had no idea.'

"This is the first time I've seen you. How would I know?" Athena replied casually.

Alpha Lucian clenched his teeth and balled his fist. He didn't like the idea that Athena didn't feel the bond. He had no idea that she had just gone through a rejection, making her wolf weak and now on the brink of death.

'She better not be a Crimson Pack spy, or I kill her myself,' Alpha Lucian told his wolf as he met Athena's eyes.