

Grace of a Wolf Book 2

Grace of a Wolf Chapter 4 - Grace: A Sudden Change Chapter 4: Grace: A Sudden Change

"Grace."

Alpha's commanding voice has my head snapping up before my brain is even functioning. I must have fallen asleep.

A threadbare blanket falls to the floor as I sit up; someone covered me when I fell asleep on the couch. Several adult wolves had swarmed the clearing only minutes after my protector fled, and—thankfully—were not a part of the sexual haze of the Mate Hunt, but established and mated adults who quickly dragged me home, like a recalcitrant child.

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What were you doing? they all asked me in exasperation, like I wanted to be there.

No one listened when I tried to explain what happened.

"Alpha," I greet my adoptive father, clearing my throat when my voice croaks. "I'm sorry. I must have fallen asleep."

1

He waves one massive hand, scrutinizing me with a frown. "Tell me what happened."

Alpha's piercing gaze bores into me, and I can't shake the feeling something's off. His usual stoic demeanor has morphed into something unsettling. I swallow hard, my throat dry as sandpaper.

"I woke up in the middle of the forest during the Mate Hunt. My clothes were gone. I don't know how I got there."

He's shockingly unaffected by the words coming out of his mouth, looking more impatient than anything. "What else?"

1

"It wasn't safe, so I ran. I was trying to get home, but got lost. A strange wolf found me and kept me warm when I got lost. Andrew found us a while later and they both fought, and the wolf ran away."

With each word, Alpha's frown deepens, etching harsh lines across his face. The air grows thick, oppressive, making it hard for me to breathe. Oxygen makes it into my lungs with shallow, open-mouth breaths as his aura presses down on me.

I'm dizzy. And confused.

Alpha's never used his aura on me before. He says humans are too weak to stand up to it. Now, I see why.

It's like he's stealing the air from around me. Black spots dot my vision.

"Are you hiding anything from me, Grace?"

His tone makes me shudder. He doesn't sound like my adoptive father. He sounds... angry. "What do you mean?"

Alpha's eyes narrow, his jaw clenching. "Are you hiding a shift from me, girl?"

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I stare at him, mouth agape, struggling to process his words. "I... what? I'm human. How could I possibly hide a shift?" What insane question is that?

The change in Alpha is instantaneous and terrifying. His face contorts, features twisting into something inhuman. Gone is the stern but caring father figure I've known all these years. In his place stands a stranger, regarding me with cold disdain.

"Alpha?" My voice quivers, barely above a whisper.

He takes a step closer, looming over me. "Don't lie to me, girl. Did you shift?"

I shake my head frantically. "No! No, I didn't shift. I'm human!"

Alpha's hand shoots out, his fingers digging into my jaw. A strangled gasp escapes my lips as he pulls me forward. His eyes blaze golden, feral and unfamiliar. The air thickens, pressing down on me like a physical weight.

"Shift. Now."

His command slams into me, an invisible force threatening to crush my bones. My lungs struggle against the pressure, each breath a battle.

"I can't," I wheeze. "Please, I'm human—"

"Shift!"

The order reverberates through my body, setting every nerve ending on fire. My vision hazes, darkness creeping at the edges. I want to obey, to do anything to make this stop, but there's nothing to obey with. No wolf hiding beneath my skin.

"Alpha, please—"

His grip tightens, nails biting into my flesh. "Shift, damn you!"

The world tilts and spins. My legs give out, but Alpha's grip keeps me upright. Spots dance across my vision as he shakes me, each command more forceful than the last.

Suddenly, I'm airborne. My back slams against the floor, driving what little air remains from my lungs. I lay there, boneless, gasping like a fish out of water. The crushing weight of Alpha's presence lifts, allowing me to draw in ragged, desperate breaths.

Through the haze of pain and confusion, I force my eyes open. Alpha towers over me, his face a mask of disgust and contempt. The replacement father I've known all these years is gone, replaced by this cold, furious stranger.

A voice filters through the ringing in my ears. Beta. When did he arrive?

Alpha's words cut through the fog, clear and devastating. "We wasted these years. She's truly just a human. The bitch betrayed me."

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Betrayed? The accusation stings worse than the physical pain. How could I betray him? I've done nothing but try to belong, to prove my worth. Being human in a wolf pack is not an easy life.

"Alpha," I croak, struggling to push myself up. My arms tremble, threatening to give out.

But they ignore me.

"To ignore a mate bond," Beta says, spitting on the ground. "It is good she doesn't share your blood, Alpha. Your line would be weakened with a mother like hers. An honorless whore."

6

Alpha growls. "To sire a human with my mate mark on her neck... I would kill her again if I could."

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Shock steals the very breath from my lungs, what bit of it I've managed to gather with my ragged gasps.

My mother... mated to Alpha? It can't be true. She was human, just like me. Wasn't she?

I stare at Alpha's back, willing him to turn around. To tell me he's joking. That all of this is nothing more than some fever dream.

"What are you talking about?" My voice trembles, barely a whisper, but loud enough for his keen senses. "My mother was human. She couldn't have been your mate."

"Your mother was a liar. A whore who betrayed our bond."

3

My mind reels. It's impossible. It has to be.

"What should I do with the girl?"

Alpha turns, his upper lip lifted in a sneer. "She is no daughter of mine. Send her to serve the omegas. It'll keep them silent for a while."

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"Understood, Alpha."