

## Chapter 24

Dimitri

Luke, Ben and I sat in my office going over every possible reason, theory and hypothesis as to why a Clan Elder would want me dead. The room was now full of books that Luke had carried down from the library, and we each had our own stack to go through, looking for any other vital information. I myself was trying to remember a time where I might have come into contact with a witch, a Clan, anything. I never had. It didn't make sense, not to me anyways. Wolves and witches were enemies, we had been for centuries. According to the book I was reading now the last time the two groups had anything major to do with one another was in the mid eighteenth century, when an uneasy truce had been made; both sides keep to themselves and cease any unnecessary bloodshed.

I was so absorbed that I totally lost track of time, missing dinner. It wasn't until Lily knocked on the office door and Ben let her in that I remembered we had plans.

"If you're busy, we can do this another time." She said as she took in the mess of books and papers lying around.

"No, no. It'll be here when I get back. Let's go." I stood and nodded to my Beta and Gamma.

"Make good choices!" Ben called out after us and I shot him the finger. Lily blushed a deep scarlet before hiding her face.

"So... same place?" She asked quietly.

"Sure."

We walked in silence together, not sure what to say. I had lots I wanted to say, but our relationship was unsteady right now. Another fact, I still wasn't sure if I wanted this girl the way a mate should. I was attracted to her, insanely. She was beautiful. Anyone with eyes could see it. It was just too easy to continue with my ways and hold her at a distance.

"It didn't seem like it this morning." Ajax snickered.

"You're not helping, you know."

"I am, you just don't know it yet. You want her, you just don't know how to let her in."

"What makes you such an expert?"

"Really? My mate loves me. Your mate tolerates you. Just because I'm a beast doesn't mean I don't know how to love. I share things with her, communicate with her. Traits you undoubtedly are lacking in."

"So, what do you want me to do? Candle light dinner and star gazing?" I scoffed. Lily glanced sideways at me but didn't comment.

"How about asking her a question first dumbly. Like, her interests or favorite books or something."

I pondered his words for a few moments. Maybe I could try...

"Books." I said stupidly.

"What?" Lily gave me a confused look.

"Uh, I mean, you like books?"

She raised an eyebrow but thankfully answered. "Yes..."

"Good. That's uh, good."

"Okay?"

"Wow." Ajax was rolling around in my head in complete hysterics.

"I tried, okay?"

"yup. Yup, you did!"

I growled lightly and Lily came to a stop.

"Ready?" She asked. I looked around; we weren't in the clearing like last time, but still far enough away. I nodded and she walked away behind a tree. Taking the opportunity, I stripped out of my clothes and quickly shifted. Shaking out my fur, I waited for Lily to return. When she did, my breath caught in my throat. I hadn't forgotten what she looked like of course, but it was something else to see it in front of you. She was stunning.

"Thank you for this."

I heard a voice in my head that didn't belong to Lily. So, this was her wolf?

"Aya, right?"

"Yes."

"You don't need to thank me. Ajax wanted to see you too."

"Still. Lily is grateful too."

"Uh, great. I'm going to give control over to Ajax. Have fun guys."

I did as I said, and off they went. Mostly I ignored what was going on, letting our wolves have time together more in less in private. Together they played, ran and hunted. Ajax was pouting that he didn't have the biggest kill when they took down a herd of passing deer; After all he was an Alpha. When Aya suggested they hunt something more his speed, such as rabbits, I earned myself a growl for laughing so hard. She was as snarky and had just as much attitude as Lily.

It was after midnight when our wolves decided to give back control, giving each other a fond farewell. The love pouring through the bond between them made me anxious. Also, a bit jealous. I was happy to let Ajax spend time with his mate, though I couldn't spend time with mine the same way. I tried to keep my thoughts to myself because I knew Ajax

would blame me for that outcome. Walking to our clothes, we shifted and dressed. Lily was smiling when she emerged from the trees, and I was overcome with emotion.

"That was fun. Thank you so much." She grinned at me.

"Yeah. No problem."

Her smile faltered and I wanted to smack myself. Clearing her throat, her eyes wandered around the forest.

"So, I was thinking..."

"Yes?"

"Uhm, we should probably make me an official member soon. Aya can mind link you, when in wolf form, but I can't at all." She studiously ignored my gaze as she talked.

The scene with James flashed in my mind. How different would that have played out if she had been able to mind link someone for help? Even if it wasn't me, someone would have gotten to her.

"That sounds like a good idea. I'll arrange it."

"Okay. Thanks."

I nodded. Silence fell.

"Well... I'll see you tomorrow." I said awkwardly.

"Kay."

"Goodnight Lily."

Her eyes met mine. "Goodnight."

Forcing myself to turn and walk away went against my other instincts. I wanted to walk with her back home, make sure she got there safely. Still, I left her standing behind me, a thoughtful look on her face. It made me wonder what she was thinking about, and if it was about me. Was it bad

or good? Sneaking a peek over my shoulder, I was disappointed to see her walking away, taking a different route back to the house.

I broke from the tree line, decidedly in a bad mood. Too many thoughts and unfamiliar feelings were washing through me. So, it came as no surprise that my mood worsened considerably when I bumped into Jennine. Literally, into the back of her.

"Oh Dimitri! There you are!" She gushed.

"What are you doing out here Jennine?" It was almost one in the morning.

"Oh, you know me. I'm a night owl. I couldn't sleep, so I went for a run." Her eyes sparked with anger.

"Good for you." I attempted to step around her, but she blocked my path.

"Can we talk for a minute?"

"Nope."

I sidestepped but she blocked me again. This bitch was testing my patience.

"Move. Now." I growled.

Placing her hand on her hips, she gave me a cold glare. "I just want to know, for certain, that it's really over between us."

I blinked. Was she for real? I'd slammed her head against a wall and yelled at her. How much clearer could I be on the subject?

"There was nothing between us. Like I said before, I needed to get laid, and you were easy. End of story. There was no real relationship, Jennine."

"Well, if there was nothing between us then, maybe there can be now." She purred. Her hands moved up my arms and landed on my shoulders. Pressing her body into mine, she batted her fake eyelashes at me; the urge to throw her off, preferably into a tree, was almost overwhelming. As it was, I did remove her hands and gave her a light shove away from me.

"Don't touch me."

"This is ridiculous Dimitri! I know you- you never even wanted a mate! But apparently that changed just because she's some super wolf?"

My head snapped up. "Were you following us?"

"No. I just happened to come across you and your mate. That's why you left me? She might have some powerful wolf Dimitri, but she is not Luna material. She's nothing but a worthless piece of shi-"

"Enough!" I snarled. My Alpha voice came out and Jennine's eyes widened in fear. Closing the distance between us, I towered over her. "I told you before, you will not disrespect her like this. Whatever ideas you have about you and I are not up for debate. There is nothing between us, there is never going to be anything between us. I don't want you; I don't love you. I wouldn't choose you, even if Lily hadn't come into the picture. As for what you classify as 'Luna material', take a good long look in the mirror Jennine, because it's not you. Make me repeat myself again, and you won't like what happens. Do I make myself clear?"

She nodded mutely and I finally stepped around and stormed away. How could one person be so dense?