

## Chapter 32

Dimitri

"So? What happened?" Ben tossed a rolled-up paper at me, and I batted it away.

"Nothing. It was a normal day at the beach. We went swimming, I showed her the tide pools, we built a sandcastle-"

"You built a sandcastle? You?" Luke gawked at me.

"She wanted to, so, yes we did."

They looked at each and grinned.

"Why are you smiling like that?" I asked.

"Our boys in love." Sang Ben.

"So in loooooove!" Luke chimed in.

"I am not in love! I just did something nice for her. She's never been to the beach."

"Whatever man. I'll remind you of that at your wedding."

"We're already married dumbass."

"A half-ass wedding we weren't even invited to." Luke scoffed.

"You'll have your own wedding. Stop bitching."

They grinned again and I gave up.

"If you two are done grilling me, can we work now?"

"Alright, fine. Just know that we are happy for you, and proud of you. I'm sure Lily won't forget it anytime soon." Ben said as he sat down.

I hid my smile, hoping he was right. I knew I wouldn't forget.

"Are the new security measures in place?"

"All set up and working. We tested them this morning. Everything looks good."

"Great. Have we found anything more on the James situation?"

"Unfortunately, no. But I'm looking." Luke replied.

"Alright, then there's something I want you two to help me with. I want information on Snow Moon. All of it. Especially on the Alpha and his family. Find out everything you can, and get it to me as soon as you can."

"We can do that."

"Then get started."

"Wait, now?" Luke asked.

"No, next week. Yes, now!"

"Geez, okay." He held up his hands as he stood and they left.

Myself, I walked to my desk and opened the bottom drawer. Digging out a stack of papers, I located Alpha Theos number and picked up my phone, dialing.

"Hello?"

"Alpha Theo?"

"Yeah. Who's this?"

"Alpha Dimitri Varlos."

"Oh, Alpha! Apologies, I didn't recognize your voice. How can I help you?"

"I'm calling about Lily."

There was a short pause on his end. "What has she done?"

"Why do you assume she's done anything?"

"It's always something with that girl. Are you not satisfied with her? I'm sorry Alpha, but our agreement clearly states that-"

"I'm not calling to send her back. And yes, I am satisfied with her."

"Oh. Then why are you calling?"

His attitude had my back up. Did he have no respect?

"I'm calling because I want help locating her original pack."

"Like I told you before, we don't know where she came from."

"She never said anything? Not even a hint?" I pushed.

"No. She had no memory of a family or any pack when she showed up here."

I drummed my fingers on my desk, agitated.

"Was that everything, Alpha?"

"Yes."

"Goodbye then."

I heard the click followed by the beeping. The fucker hung up on me. I placed the receiver down, an uneasy feeling in my chest. This wasn't the first time I'd asked about Lily's past; I had before I took her from Snow Moon. It was the same answer, nobody knew anything. But now I felt a string of suspicion. I sensed Alpha Theo was hiding something from me, and I was hardly ever wrong when it came to my senses. I just had to find out what it was.

Lily didn't know I was trying to find where she'd come from. I didn't know if she wanted to know or not, but maybe having some answers would help

her in the long run. Who knew, maybe she had parents out there somewhere, possibly a sibling? I thought she would be happy if I could find her family. In the meantime, it was time I told her everything I knew so far about James's disappearance. I'd wanted more information, but it looked like a dead end for now, so it was time.

"Greta?"

"Yes Alpha?"

"Do you know where Lily is right now?"

"I do believe I saw her with Hazel a short while ago."

"Thanks."

I cut off the mind-link, opening a new one to Hazel.

"Hazel, are you with Lily?"

"Alpha?"

"Yes."

"Yes, I'm with her."

"Can you let her know to come to my office?"

"Sure."

"Thanks."

I leaned back in my chair and waited. Absentmindedly, I pick up the shell Lily had given me and rubbed my hand over the smooth surface. I hadn't missed her disappointment the other day when I didn't kiss her, and I knew she wanted me to. I'd wanted to, badly. But not like that. It was the first time both of our walls were down with each other, the first time it hadn't been awkward. Until the end anyways.

I smiled, picturing the way her face lit up when she saw the ocean. The way she giggled and laughed and just let go and had fun for a while. My

heart throbbed when I remembered the way she'd looked with the sun shining down on her, hair fiery and wild, skin glowing. She was beautiful, absolutely beautiful. I'd loved watching her expressions as she took in all the new things, things that I'd always taken for granted. She was innocent and curious about everything. Adorable.

"You wanted to see me?"

I looked up at the sound of her voice. "Yeah. Come on in."

Closing the door behind her, she made her way to her usual spot.

"What's up?"

Not wanting to beat around the bush, I said, "I wanted to update you on James."

Her eyes clouded over in anger when I said his name. "You found something?"

"Yes. A while ago, actually. But nothing new as of yet."

"Go on."

"We're pretty sure James was taken by a Clan Elder. Do you know what that is?" She shook her head. "It's a very powerful witch, or warlock, a leader. Equivalent to an Alpha."

"Okay."

"We figure this person, Gideon? Took James over anyone else because they want information on the pack. On me. Probably because they want me dead."

Lily stood, beginning to pace in front of my desk. "Why didn't you tell me sooner?"

"I wanted more to give you honestly. Luke is researching like crazy, and Ben is out following leads, but we've essentially come to a dead end for

now." I recounted everything we'd learned about Clan Elders, their power, and the different theories we had.

"Why would a Clan Elder want you dead though? What did you do?"

I guess it was fair, given my reputation, she automatically assumed I was the one at fault.

"I didn't do anything. I've never met any witches, never had any interactions with them."

She looked into my eyes, seemingly deciding I was telling the truth. Then she blew out a long breath, flopping back onto the sofa.

"It doesn't make sense."

"What doesn't?"

"Why take James? Why not take someone closer to you, like me or Ben?"

My heart clenched at the idea of her being taken. Over my dead body.

"Like I said, James is a pack member."

Her forehead creased in thought. "So? He didn't have access to the packhouse, your office, your room. He wasn't ever close to you, he knows nothing about you, not like we do."

When she put it like that, she made a lot of sense.

"But James was the lead warrior- Just one under Ned. He'd be valuable in a fight." I said.

"Even James knows he doesn't stand a chance against you. I'm just saying, it doesn't make sense."

"What are you trying to say, exactly?"

Lily played with her fingers. "What if you're not the target?"

"I'm the Alpha."

"And? I'm Luna. James was taken after assaulting me."

My heart started to race in my chest. "I don't-"

"Think about it Dimitri. If you wanted you dead, would you kidnap James?"

She was right. I hated to admit it, but I knew she was. Looking at it from her perspective, everything came together. Perhaps this Gideon wasn't involved on the attack on Lily, but now he had someone who had proved his hate for her. Someone who knew the pack, knew the schedules. James knew our borders like the back of his hand, he'd been running them for years. He knew which of my warriors were best and also how to take them out. And because of his past, he knew which room my mate was in, and how to get to her.

We stared at each other, both coming to the same conclusion; Lily was in danger.

"What do we do?" She asked me.

"We keep you safe." I deadpanned.

"How? According to you, this person can just take people from where ever they are. I could be in bed, asleep, or out with Hazel, or with you, training!"

I swallowed hard. I wish she would stop being right.

"I-I don't know." I replied uncertainly. And that was extremely hard for me to admit.

The air was tense with frustration and in my case, overwhelming worry. Ajax was pacing with anger at the thought of someone hurting our mate. Even more than that though, our inability to come up with a solution.

"Do you trust me?" Lily asked suddenly.

"Yes." I replied instantly. She seemed surprised but went on.

"Why don't we find a witch to help us? Even the odds a little?"

I pursed my lips. "That's be a great idea... if I knew any, or knew how to get in contact with any."

"You said Luke was researching and Ben was out looking for leads. One of them must know something."

"Lily, even if we find a witch, it's highly unlikely they would help. Wolves and witches hate each other."

"We don't have anything else." She whispered.

For the first time, she looked scared. And it was that that made my decision.

"Ben?"

"Yeah boss?"

"Grab Luke and come back to the office. We need to talk."