

## Chapter 77

Dimitri

"Welcome to my home Alpha. Though I don't remember extending an invitation."

Ajax was going crazy in my head, begging to be let out so he could rip this man's head off. I was close too. My voice was icy and dangerous as I answered him.

"You extended the invitation the second you took my mate from me."

Bastian's eyebrows raised in disbelief. "Your mate?"

"Yes, my mate!" I growled. "Where is she?"

"Your mate... hmm..." He paced back and forth, finger on his chin as he pretended to think. The pretense was getting to me; Finally, he halted and a slow smile crept onto his face. "Ah. You mean Lily. I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but I don't think she views you that way anymore."

My spine rippled under my skin; My vision turned red. Distantly, I felt Ben and Luke's groups join me, the men behind me closing in around me. Preparing to fight. Bastian eyed us one by one, the ignorant smile never leaving. As if he found our attempt humorous. His eyes landed on Clara, racking up and down. Ben growled loudly, the sound echoing around us.

"You must be the witch. Mate to that wolf there." He jerked his chin in their direction.

"And you are the psyche I've heard so much about." Clara deadpanned.

Bastians laughed heartily. "Is that what you think my dear? Well, at least I'm not boring. Tell me, are you happy where you are? Satisfied with the side you've chosen?"

This time, my growl joined Bens. I glanced down the line of wolves to see Clara giving Bastian an icy glare.

"More than happy in fact." She replied.

"Really? I was under the impression that you had qualms about your daughter's safety, her future. Being raised amongst wolves instead of her own kind."

"You keep my daughter out of this!" Clara shouted.

"Just think about it dear Clara. You could free yourself from this mutt-" he gestured to Ben, "- And come join me. Your daughter would be raised amongst her own kind. Better, amongst the last of the Clan that was destroyed. I would teach her true magic, make her, and you, more powerful than you'd ever dreamed."

To my surprise, Clara laughed. Bastians face fell slightly, a hint of confusion taking over.

"I would think..." She snickered. "That it would hard to teach anyone when your dead. And I don't foresee you living long enough to make that offer again."

"I never offer anything twice. But you seem to be forgetting that only one side here has a Mother Wolf. And it isn't you."

He snapped his fingers, again reminding me of Gideon. My attention was drawn to the heavy wooden doors behind him. They creaked inward slowly, revealing a small figure. My heart picked up double time. My breath stopped altogether. All I could see was the flame of red hair I loved so much, and the eyes that captivated me from the moment I set eyes on her.

"Lily." My voice was barely audible.

Bastian gestured to her, and the wolves behind him parted. She walked quickly down the steps, making her way to stand beside him. When she took his hand, smiling up at him like she did to me, my heart shattered in my chest.

"Lily." I took a step in her direction. "Lily, it's me."

She turned, but her face gave nothing away. No recognition. No smile. No love. What the fuck had he done to her?

"Is he the one?" She spoke to Bastian. Her voice was monotone, flat.

"Yes, that's him."

"What did you do? What did you tell her?!" I demanded.

"The truth. You are here to take her away from me, are you not?" He brushed her hair away from her face, and I almost shifted at the sight. "I told you he would come. He wants you for his own use. They even brought the witch, see?" He pointed to Clara.

"I do see." She gazed around emotionlessly.

"You know what you have to do."

"Yes."

"They are nothing compared to you."

"Yes."

Our eyes met. One second, Lily was a stranger. Cold, distant. The next, I saw the girl I loved. The girl I would do anything for. My chest just about cracked with relief and joy. A million questions danced in my head, but I pushed them aside for now. Her eyes pleaded with me; I kept whatever expression was on my face, ready for her signal. Lily stepped away from Bastian, her eyes only focused on me.

"It will be easy." She said. "Like... destroying a sand castle."

"NOW!" I shouted.

Men around me shifted on my command, running over the invisible line separating us. I gave control to Ajax, my clothes shredding into scraps around me. At the same time, Lily drew a sharp dagger from Goddess knows where, turning and aiming for Bastians chest. He caught her wrist at the last second, his face going from confusion, to awe, and to then anger. I jumped at them as he threw her to the ground.

"How?!" He raged.

Lily smirked. "That's not part of the game, is it Bastian?"

"Bitch! I should have drained you of your blood the minute I had you in my grasp!"

"Yeah, you probably should have."

She sent a swift kick to his shin, cussing him to stumble. Not missing my opportunity, I grabbed his shoulder with my teeth, tossing him a good ten feet into the fray of fighting wolves. Unfortunately, he recovered quickly, flicking his hand towards me. A stunning pain radiated through my body a second later; I yelped in surprise.

"You may be an Alpha, but you still don't outclass me." Bastian raised his hands again as I stood protectively in front of my mate. Before I could pounce, a bright green light shot out from the forest, hitting him in the stomach; He dropped to his knees, looking around wildly.

"Maybe he doesn't, but I do."

Gideon stepped from the thicket, a swarm of our warriors behind him. They immediately joined the battle, tearing into the rogues mercilessly. A chunk of flesh landed in front of me, blood soaking into the ground. Bastian got to his feet, eyeing his opponent.

"I didn't think you'd come. Isn't hiding sort of your thing nowadays?"

"You've threatened my family long enough."

"Alright then brother. Let's see if you've learned anything while you were cowering in fear from me."

Bastian barely had his hands raised when Gideon sent another spell at him, this one making hitting his arm. Bastian screamed as the flesh started to melt, an intense burn scorching it.

"Because of you, I missed out on raising my daughter." Gideon hit him with another spell. "You've tortured my wife." "And another.

"You used her to kidnap our daughter." Bastian was sent flying backwards, slamming into an already mangled rogue. "Tonight, the last of your Clan will die."

The two started facing off, bolts of light flying from their fingertips. I spotted Luke taking on two rogues at once, with a third coming up from behind.

"Luke! Behind you!"

Lily's voice broke me out of my reverie. I looked at her with wide eyes, wondering why on Earth she hadn't shifted yet. She must have read the question in my eyes, because she answered my unspoken thoughts.

"I can't shift. Aya is protecting the pups."

I nodded once in response. That would explain why Ajax couldn't reach her earlier.

"Go help the others. I'm going to find my mom."

I shook my head violently. I didn't want her out of my sight. Lily reached up, taking my wolf face in her small hands. She kissed my nose, drawing a whine from me.

"I'll be fine. I promise. It's far safer in there- everyone is out here, fighting. They need you Dimitri."

I licked her face, nuzzling into her. She kissed my nose again before turning and running through the packed frenzy into the castle. I watched her until she disappeared, then turned my focus again on Bastian. He looked far worse in the few minutes I'd be distracted. Gideon seemed to be handling him well, but I wasn't risking anything. Taking off in their direction, I tore through countless rogues who attacked me. Three jumped at me at once, claws raking into my flank. Grabbing one by the throat, I dispatched him quickly before killing the other two. I was less than ten feet away now.

I watched as Gideon slammed Bastian against a nearby tree, falling limply to the ground. Together, we stalked toward him. Ben appeared at my side, Luke covering our backs. Bastian eyed the three of us, and for the first time, I saw fear in his eyes.

"No wait!" He gasped. "It's my right to choose how I die! That's the law of the Clans!"

"You don't get that right! You are an exile!" Gideon snapped.

I shifted back to my human form. The snarls and yelps behind me faded away as I glared down at my enemy.

"How would you choose to die?" I asked.

He met my gaze with wide eyes. I could see the gears turning in his head. "To the death. You and me."

Ben snorted behind me. Fast as lightning, I struck. Taking his head in my hands, I twisted with all my strength; I was left with a mangled corpse at my feet.

"I win." I turned to Gideon. "Burn the body."

He nodded, snapping his fingers. Flames erupted, hot and high. We turned away, facing the now still rogues before us.