

## Chapter 17

Leila gasps in shock, clutching her chest at the pain that rips through her. Her head spins, feeling like it is ready to split open. The torture is emotional, mental, as well as physical.

He turned his back against her, he didn't take her side, he doesn't choose her yet again but she wants to hear him say it, she wants to hear the words from his lips, she wants to hear him say: 'I believe you are a monster, a vindictive woman who hurt my true mate out of bitter jealousy.'

"Alpha," she sobs silently, her eyes full of pain, every syllable laden with agony. "I know I am not above the law but do you believe I broke it?"

Tatum frowns, looking down at the pitiful Carmela gently resting in his arms before he turns his gaze upon Leila but before he can speak, Carmela cries out.

"My arm.....I can't take it anymore, this pain is going to kill me," she wails, seeing that the cold look in Alpha Tatum's eyes was morphing into a pitiful one as he looked at Leila.

"Stay here till I return, I will see to this matter myself," Tatum replies to Leila in a calm voice.

"To what end?" Adaline cries out in an angry tone.

"The law is the law. Any act of violence carried out against a pack member out of malice must be done to the culprit themselves, to the

same extent of damage. I'm calling the warriors to drag her to the cells to break her wrist just like she broke Carmi's."

"No," Tatum replies curtly. "Luna's punishment can only be extended by the Alpha, meaning, me...AFTER due process. She is still my Luna, how would it look if I detain her?"

He really leaves her no room to nurture even some false hope.

Leila purses her lips and she wishes her tears would stop but they just cannot. Everytime Tatum opens his mouth, a fresh gust of pain wrecks her heart and there is nothing she can do to stop it.

She is helpless to the feelings she has for him. What sort of love keeps her spellbound when the truth is painfully smacking her in the face?

Even now, instead of accepting the reality before her, that her feelings never mattered, does not matter and will never matter to him, that old tiny part of her heart still yearns with hope that he will somehow be there for her, be for her and be with her.

"There is no need for any due process!" Adaline snarls. "I saw it with my own eyes, I saw her snapping Carmela's wrist. She is guilty and must be punished."

Darren comes to Adaline with a sullen look: "You were once a Luna yourself, Adaline, support your son, AND the law."

His august voice silents Adaline just long enough for Tatum to make a stand.

"That's enough, I have made my judgement. Leila will remain here until I get back," Tatum retorts with authority, glancing at Leila before he walks away with Carmela sobbing in his arms and Adaline follows behind them, snapping her fingers at Leila.

Leila looks at Tatum with her heart throbbing as he walks away. He was quick to pass judgement on her without hearing her side of the story.

What a fool she has been, this man does not hold one ounce of love in his heart for her.

Whatever pity that made him marry her is obviously nothing compared to his awe inspiring love for Carmela. This is the end of the road for her, the end of the road for her one sided and unrequited love.

"Come Leila, I'll tend to your wound," Darren says, coming into Leila's view.

"I'm- I'm fine," Leila replies and another heart rending sob tears through her.

Darren hugs her tight, his heart breaking for her. "I believe you didn't do it and I'm sure Tatum does too but he cannot be seen as biased, I'll talk to him when he gets back, no harm will come to you."

Leila pulls away from him, looking at him with teary eyes and a conflicted heart.

His affection and care only serves to remind her of a life that is no

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longer hers. She doesn't even care to be punished, Carmela gave her life to save her, she would gladly lose an arm if it would appease Carmela but what hurt her is that Tatum thinks she did it.

Does he really think that low of her? When Tatum returns, she would gladly take his punishment but it won't be as his Luna, no, she will give him the divorce papers first.

"I'm going home," She replies in a broken voice.

"Very well, but we must have that eye checked first," Darren replies.

"I'm fine," She replies, walking away briskly with her shoulders slumped and her head bowed.

When Tatum comes back to punish her, the least she could do is to end it before anything, she has kept him as hers for too long when he never was.

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