

Chapter 193 For The Good Of The Pack

Alexander

Fiona blinked her blue eyes open. My body flooded with relief.

“Baby, are you okay?”

She released a heavy exhale and made a slightest nod with her head, squinting her eyes. “I’m okay.” She cleared her throat. “Shit. My head hurts, though.”

“Fuck, Fiona. You scared me.”

She forced her eyes back open. “I know.” Her voice was a little louder, a little more normal. “But I’m really okay, Alex. I only fainted... right? How long was I out for?”

She started moving her hands around, feeling my hold on her body and figuring out where we were. I was kneeling on the floor in the interview room, cradling her in my arms.

I had managed to react in time to catch Fiona as she fell from her chair, before her head hit the floor. Kayden came quick when I mindlinked him. He removed Roland from the room. The two of them were probably halfway back down to the traitor’s jail cell in the dungeon by now.

“Just a few seconds.” I stood up. Fiona glanced down at the ground as we rose, then looked up at me with a sleepy smile.

“I think I can stand up on my own now,” she said quietly.

“Maybe you could. But I would rather carry you to our room and lie you down for a while before we find out, okay?”

I didn’t wait for a reply, just took off down the hall. Fiona let her body go limp in my arms again.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” she muttered. “Perhaps I should not have tried that...”

“Please don’t apologize, Fi. You were trying to help me, like I asked you to. You didn’t know that would happen. Neither did I...” I sighed.

She reached up and ran her fingernails through my short beard. I could tell she was feeling better by the quality of her touch. She was awake and coming back to herself. I looked down at her as we reached our bedroom door.

“You can put me down. Really.” She pinched my cheek playfully. I believed her and did so. It made getting my keys out of my pocket and unlocking the door a lot easier.

But once the door was open I swept her back up into my arms, making Fiona giggle. I loved the sound of her laughter. It was especially wonderful to hear after the scare she had just given me. I carried her to the bed and laid her down upon it gently.

I heard Nina’s delicate footfall approaching from the nursery. She closed the door behind her and whisper-shouted, “What is happening here? Fi, are you okay?”

“I’m fine.”

“She fainted.”

“What?! Fiona.”

I let Fiona’s friend take my place at her bedside and went to the kitchenette to get a glass of water and a snack to offer her.

“What’s going on, babe?” Nina was asking. She patted clumsily at Fiona’s cheek and forehead in a silly pantomime of taking her temperature.

“I decided to get creative with my emotion-sensing abilities and pushed too far, it seems.”

“And that was it—you fainted from trying to read someone’s energy? Sheesh.”

“Well, pretty much.” Fiona looked over at me cautiously as I approached the bed. I sat down beside her and handed her the water. She thanked me, took it and drank.

“I’d like to call the doctor. Have her come by and check you out.”

Fiona grimaced. “It’s not necessary, Alex. I think I am just sleep-deprived. I just need to rest. It’s always draining when I open up and take on other people’s feelings... I just did too much of that, while already running on insufficient sleep. That’s all.”

I gave her a critical look, but she stared me down stubbornly.

“Fine. As long as you agree to take it very easy for the rest of the day today.”

“I can do that.”

Nina had moved away when I joined Fiona on the bed. “Do you guys want me to give you some family time?” she asked from across the room. She was perched on top of a table and scrolling on her phone. “I could head out...”

“You don’t need to rush away, Nina. And actually, if you wouldn’t mind, it would be a great help to me if you can hang around to assist with the baby a little longer. There is something I should go take care of before it gets too late in the day.”

“Oh, yeah. No problem. She slept most of the time you guys were out earlier, by the way.”

Fiona arched an eyebrow at me questioningly.

I mindlinked her in order to have a brief, private conversation. I told her I was going to go speak with Iris about setting a timeline for her moving out.

“Thank you,” Fiona said quietly. “I really appreciate it.”

The facts were these.

My Luna was pushing herself to, and beyond, her limits to support and assist me.

I’d been trying to think of a gesture that would show her how much I cared for and appreciated her.

And there was only one thing that Fiona outrightly expressed that she needed and wanted from me. That was evicting Iris from the palace.

It was just unfortunate that this was so. Of course I also would be relieved to not have Iris hanging around our home any longer, but getting rid of her just wasn’t that simple. My mother had loved Iris like family, and Iris had come to great harm while caring for my mother in her final moments. No matter how annoying she may be, I could not treat Iris poorly. It would be a disgrace to my mother’s memory if I did.

But I needed to take care of my wife, too. And do whatever I needed to do to make her happy.

I still had no plan when I reached Iris’s room. I just knocked on the door and hoped for the best.

Fiona

Nina sat cross-legged at the foot of the bed facing me, eating grapes and telling me about her visit to my parents’ house the day prior. She had gone by in the evening and found it abuzz with activity.

“A bunch of cars double-parked in the driveway, and all up and down the street. I didn’t get too close, and I didn’t see your mom. She was probably inside the whole time. But I found a couple young guys smoking down the block, they looked like they had been mingling with the crowd around your mom’s house, and I asked if I could bum a cigarette from them.”

“Don’t tell me you’re smoking again.”

“Big picture, Fi.” Nina rolled her eyes. “I was just making an excuse to talk to them. I acted like I was just chit-chatting but I got them to tell me all about what was going on with your family and their pack...”

“Basically, they all decided your dad’s not coming back. Seems like nobody knows what happened to him but most believe he abandoned them, running out on everyone ahead of some criminal charges he might’ve been facing. The pack was feeling like if he ever did return, he would no longer deserve Alpha status, let alone be permitted to lead. Two other Alphas fought for the position just yesterday morning. The one that was left standing is about to be inducted as pack leader. And, um, well, it sounds like he is basically laying a claim on your mother, too. Saying he is going to marry her.”

“What? That’s... not necessary.”

“Right.” Nina frowned. “Anyway, this is all just the word of those scummy guys I chatted up. The ‘word on the street,’ if you will. I don’t know how you could force a woman who’s still legally married to someone else to enter into another marriage, anyway. But that’s the message the guy is pushing. His name is ‘Mack’ something. That’s all I could find out.”

I didn’t recognize the name. Not that it mattered if I knew him. Whoever he was, I hated him for forcing himself on my mother like that.

I hated thinking about the fact that he’d probably already forced himself on her physically, too. My mother was a quiet, deeply submissive and very beautiful woman. This jackass probably felt he’d won her like a prize.

I hated that I couldn’t reach out to her. And I hated even more that it wouldn’t do any good anyway, even if I did. I could practically hear my mother’s soft voice in my head as I imagined what she’d say, explaining why she would not resist.

“If it is for the good of the pack,” she would say, “then it is what I must do...”