

Chapter 139

Two wolves and one vampire volunteered to take the request for surrender to the castle. We pulled the forces together, standing in formation around the camp. Each captain was leading their own platoon and we were stretched around the castle, completely surrounding it. King Uriel and the fey were covering the east end but we were informed this morning that a few witches had been spotted going into the castle. That didn't bode well for us but we didn't know how many had turned. Hector tried to reach out to the Head Witch but there was no answer.

I shook out my fur and looked down our line. We were at the head of our group. Mostly, it was comprised of our Golden Moon warriors. The only ones that were missing were because they had taken command of their own sections. I had shifted into my wolf form, standing next to Vale who was in human form. Next to him was Auri, and then Hector in wolf form next to her. He was huge, towering over her figure and nearly at height with Vale. Her hand was rubbing his fur but she was staring ahead at the castle.

Vale's hand ruffled the fur on my head and I nuzzled his side. 'It's been a while since I've stood next to you like this. I forget how much I love your wolf form.'

'Even though I'm not as big a Hector?'

He chuckled and I watched him spy at Hector. 'Hector is a level of huge that I don't understand. Nor would I want him to take me from the back.' I felt his shiver. 'I really hope Mom doesn't...'

I hissed, cutting off his mind link. 'Gross, Vale. That's your mom.'

Vale grumbled. 'She looks like my younger sister.'

'I can hear both of you, and it needs to stop. Otherwise, I'll give you both a breakdown of exactly how Hector and I have sex in wolf form and I won't hold back.' Auri's voice filtered into our conversation.

I snorted and Vale turned the color of his hair, the blood draining from his face. 'No. Thank. You.'

'Didn't think so.'

Looking away, I tried not to laugh but it was seriously hard. Even Faris found it amusing. I figured she might be monitoring the area but it wasn't until she said something that I realized she was probably doing it through mind link.

'Speaking of kids. Where are they?'

Auri sighed heavily. 'They are with Uriel's group. They are more equipped to handle them right now. At the very back of the group. Though, their weapons were distributed that they brought.'

She leaned forward a bit and I could see the string of holy water grenades strapped to her chest. 'Feels like the old days. Only thing missing is Kai telling me this is a stupid idea and then counting down with me to fight them.' Her chuckle was sad but nostalgic.

'They've reached the castle.'

All of our talk dropped as we waited. Once they came back, we would get the full review but right now, we would wait to see what they had to say. Vale started to give me

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the play-by-play.

'Oran has come out as the Vampire King, flanked by Gale the head witch and Bishop, the Alpha of the largest pack in Africa.' 1

'Well, that explains them not speaking to us. We knew packs had joined them though.' I added, shifting the weight from my left to right paws.

Vale hummed. 'I'm just not happy about it.'

'We knew they were one of the biggest supporters of Nova 2.0. We can't really say we are surprised. They were even more on board with it than Harvest Moon. Not much we can do now.'

I knew my words would fall on deaf ears. As Alpha King, this was a slight against him. I doubted Vale or Naresh would let this go lightly even if they did end up turning over the King and the kids. Suddenly, Vale's hand grasped my fur in a fist. My head looked up at him but his eyes were wide. Next to him, Auri's shown gold, almost lighting up like fire, and I saw Hector's fur completely raise on his back.

Their mood change was almost immediate as the warriors behind us and around us shifted, tightening the grip on their weapons or shifting to their wolf forms. Faris was snapping, his growls were more than just a low rumble. I could feel Vale's emotions but right now they were fuzzy. Mostly shock was coming through. It took me a moment to realize Faris wasn't reacting to Vale's emotions but to Auri's. Her emotions were the ones overpowering everyone.

'Auri, you need to settle down. You're effecting everyone

here.'

Her eyes slowly slid towards mine and I did my best not to shrink under the gaze.

"They killed two of the three messengers. They've brought out the pups and they have been tortured. I will not be quieted, Alpha Ezekiel. I will not let this go. They have hurt our pups. They've violated every decency that we have afforded them."

Auri closed her eyes. It was like a drop of water touched her nose. The ripples of her shift were like Vale but the way she shifted was a much smoother transition. Her wolf wasn't as large as Hector but it was still a size that was not normal. Vale was every bit of her son but when she let out a howl rip from her throat, it made my claws come forth. It didn't even take a second for the other howls to echo through the entire forest. There were even loud cries and yells coming from the fey that sounded haunting.

'Auri, we need to protect Vale. Please. Don't do this if we don't need to.'

"They've killed the first messenger. Oran knew we were listening. He laughed in our faces. He told us that we were stupid for coming here. That we will lose everything. Mom, is right. He's gone too far. We have to attack now. Otherwise...who knows what they will do. No more negotiations. No more waiting. We are going in now!"
Vale's voice rose above the howls.

Vale turned and I looked out over the sea of wolves, vampires, and fey who had joined us. Both in my mind and out loud, I heard his words.

"Now is the time to secure our peace. Now is the time

that we take back what it rightfully ours. Take back our land, our emotions, and our ability to work with one another. The Vampire King has decided to kill our messengers. Hurt our children. He is the one responsible for the drugs, the kidnappings, the disappearances, all the while saying he was on the side of peace." Vale took a breath, his eyes growing their bright gold.

"We will not stand for this. There are consequences to your decisions and this is his. We are his consequence. We will stand against his tyranny for ourselves, our children, our fellow kind that couldn't be here, and for our future generations that would hurt by them. We will not let them destroy what we have worked so hard to build! We will have peace! We will taken them down and we will send their souls to the goddess for judgement!"

A roar filled their air. It rippled with strength and power and anger. Howls and slamming of feet and paws on the ground made it feel like an earthquake. Auri and Hector howled together, theirs louder than all the rest. I lifted my head and had Faris step forward, his howl rippling through the air as well. Vale looked down, a decisive nod with a brush against our muzzle.

"It's time. They are coming."

He turned back around and shifted. Instead of a drop from above, Vale stepped into the water. The rippling following from head to tail. The two of them, with their pure white fur and golden eyes, were a sight to see. Hector on the other side looked like a beast with his dark brown fur and the peppering of grey that streaked his fur. In this form, neither Auri or Hector looked any younger than normal. Nothing had changed save for their size.

I turned back to the forests in front of us. My ears picked up the snarling and growling. The beat of footsteps. My heart leapt into my throat and fear managed to weasel its way into my heart. We weren't ready. I wasn't ready. This was a war. A battle. I'd already avoided one thanks to Auri but hearing it now, I felt like I was rooted in my spot. How did they do this before? How had Auri and Hector stood on the battlefield and not been afraid?

'Of course we were afraid, Zeke. We were afraid for our friends, our loved ones. No one really wants to die. There will always be that seed of fear. You can't let it stop you though. You must step forward. For fear of failing is far worse. Failing your mate. Failing your pack. Failing your kids on the other side of these misguided shifts.' Auri's voice was unwavering as it filtered into my mind. 'They will pay for killing my children. For Jax and for Wendy. They will pay for giving my other children more pain. They will pay for kidnapping my pups. They will all pay.'

I nodded. She was right. My focus should be on the anger. Letting that loose after holding it down all this time. It didn't serve me before, planning and setting up, but it would now. Now their reckoning had come. Now I could pay them back for every tear I shed. Every tear Vale shed. The weight of his guilt that he couldn't protect them against this mad man. I would destroy them, alongside my family. We would rescue them and all go home; together. Nothing mattered but protecting everything we held dear. If it meant killing and tearing into every single one of the fuckers coming at us, then so be it. Our choice was made. Mine, was made. I would follow my mate, my king, into this and ensure we lived through the end of it.