

Sold as the Alpha King's Breeder

Chapter 237



Chapter 17: Ernest's Mate

Maeve

"Don't say your name? Why?"

"Just in that context. I don't... we can't."

"I know," I said hurriedly, feeling foolish. It couldn't be personal. That had to be what he meant. I fidgeted, looking past him toward the door. He followed my gaze, then snapped his head back around, giving me a serious look.

"Leave them alone, Maeve. I know what you're thinking."

"I just really need to talk to Ernest—"

"No, you don't."

"You don't understand, Aaron. Gemma is in a bit of a crisis right now,"

"Because they're mates? That doesn't sound like a crisis to me." He stood there, staring at me blankly as my jaw dropped open.

"How the hell did you know that?"

"Uh, he told me? Is it supposed to be a secret?"

I turned from him, pacing over to a set of couches that had been pushed up against the wall so that the maid could polish and wax the floor. I felt a little guilty as I looked down at the very obvious footprints left in the fresh wax, but the room was rarely used. It was my first time spending more than a few minutes here myself. "Well, if you know about it then it's not a secret, is it?"

He shrugged, reaching up to crack open the window. "What do you need to talk to him about that's so pressing you'd interrupt them?"

"I wasn't going to interrupt them," I lied, pursing my lips as he cast me an incredulous look. "I just wanted to talk to him privately."

"About why he won't marry and have children?"

I gaped at him again, my jaw nearly hitting the floor. "You know about that? You know why?"

"Yeah, he told me all about it." Aaron's tone was so casual that I laughed, unable to stop myself. He peered at me, tilting his head as I sat down on one of the dusty couches. "Do you seriously not know? How could you not know? Your whole reason for being here is to produce the heir he refuses,"

"Refuses? No, he can't have children."

"Oh, he's perfectly capable of having children."

"1-How?"

Aaron walked over, sitting down on the arm rest with his legs splayed open. I could see the outline of his cock in the comically tiny shorts he was wearing, and he made no move to hide it, either. He caught my gaze and I blushed, which was actually the reaction he had wanted. His mouth twitched into a smile as he stretched his arms above his head, groaning loudly as I waited for him to answer my questions.

"Aaron!"

"Okay, okay!" He pivoted on the arm rest and put both of his feet on the couch, facing me. "Ernest said he had a vision that his mate and their child would die, so he decided he would never marry or have children."

I furrowed my brow, trying to gauge whether or not Aaron was messing with me. "Really?"

"Dead serious. In fact, he told me his own mother had the same vision, and she was the driving force behind getting your dad to bring you here."

"My Aunt Georgia? You're joking!" I felt myself flush, my skin prickling with a chill as his words settled. Aunt Georgia never talked

about having visions. There were wolves who had special traits, like my mother, but seers were rare if they were real at all. At least, that's what my parents told me after Aaron's own mother cursed me, after his accident. My mom's powers were well known, but we descended from the Moon Goddess herself as White Queens. Aunt Georgia and my dad were just... wolves, like everyone else.

"I'm not messing with you right now, I promise. And I know how ridiculous it sounds. He said he thought it was just a dream until his mom said something about it. This all happened shortly before they left, I guess, his parents, for their—"

"Long sabbatical," I said with a little laugh, despite the painful tightening in my chest at his words. My Uncle Talon and Aunt Georgia had ruled over Drogomor in my father's place. Dad wanted to be in Winter Forest with us, not thousands of miles away in Valoria. I didn't know the details of the exchange of power, but I do know Ernest became Alpha at a ridiculously young age, sixteen or seventeen, when his parents decided to leave Valoria and travel west to take up residence in Breles. Ernest had refused to go with them. The castle of Drogomor was all he knew.

"Yeah, well, Ernest believes it. I tried to talk him out of it,"

"It's probably true," I said with conviction.

Aaron narrowed his eyes at me, shaking his head. "You're kidding, right? It's fanciful at best-" He paused, the muscles of his neck contracting in the dim light as he swallowed. "You're not cursed, Maeve. Neither of you,"

"Your own mother cursed me, Aaron."

"She.. she couldn't have. It's not real, just like Ernest's vision was just,"

"I'm a White Queen, like my mother. I'm supposed to come into my power. I was. I told the nurse in the infirmary to save some of my blood for healing and she only... she only smiled. She smiled because she knows it's useless."

"What are you saying, Maeve? That something an angry woman said now determines your future? How do you know your blood doesn't have healing powers, or whatever it does?"

"My mom," I breathed, looking over at him. He was watching me intentionally, his eyes lingering on mine. "She believed it. I could see it in her eyes. I know she still does."

"What exactly is this curse?"

I shrugged, leaning forward over my knees to look down at the floor. "That I won't find my mate. That I won't come into my powers as a wolf."

"Well, when's your birthday?"

I looked up at him. "Not until August."

"Then you shouldn't worry about it until August." He stood, holding out his hand to me and shaking it when I hesitated.

"Where are we going?"

"To tell Ernest he's being an idiot."

"I thought you said not to interrupt them?"

"Well, I changed my mind."

I arched my brow as I took his hand, suspicious beyond measure. Aaron was a master of deflection. He obviously didn't want to talk about the day he got hurt in front of me, or his mother, or my possible curse. But, I was thankful for the break in conversation. I didn't want to think about it, anyway.

He led me back into the hallway, but we were surprised to see Ernest walking quickly down the corridor away from us, his back turned and his shoulders rigid with tension.

"Hey! Where are you going?" Aaron called out.

I tried wrenching my hand free from his grasp, but he squeezed my hand, tucking it behind his back, and we all came to stop in the corridor

Ernest turned, looking flustered. "I forgot the Alpha of Greenbriar was arriving for a conference today. I have to go down to the village to escort him to the castle. Give him a little tour." He sighed deeply, running his fingers through his hair.

"I could go," I said, digging my fingernails into Aaron's hand. I felt him stiffen beside me and inhale, but his face was calm and firmly fixed on Ernest. Ernest ran his fingers through his hair again, ruffling it beyond repair, then looked me up and down.

"Are you sure? I haven't heard great things about this guy. Lance says he's kind of a creep."

I'd be happy to. I need the fresh air and you need to work things out with—"Aaron stepped backward, his heel crunching my toes. I let out my breath in a hiss, glancing up at him and noticing the abrupt change in his demeanor. He was looking forward, his gaze traveling well past Ernest and into a darkened corner of the corridor where it would back toward the grand entrance of the castle.

Horace was standing in the shadows, his owlish eyes watching the three of us. I swallowed, exhaling as Aaron removed his heel from my toes. It had been a warning.

But why?

"I'll go with her to fetch this guy, how does that sound?" Aaron said, still looking over the top of Ernest's head at the figure lurking in the shadows. Did I just see him narrow his eyes?

"You'd really only need to escort him and his entourage from the train station to the road leading to the castle. Lance will meet them there. I'd definitely feel better if you went with her, Aaron. Thank you for offering."

Aaron only nodded, trying his best to lift his mouth in a smile but he struggled, his gaze still fixed on Horace, who had just slipped back into the shadows as though he were a ghost.

"But," I began to say in protest, interrupted as Aaron led me down the hallway past Ernest with a death grip on my hand. "Hey!"

He spun around to face me as he pulled me into a darkened corner. He was livid.

"What's the matter with you?" I asked in a hissed whisper, freeing my hand from his grip.

He looked around to confirm we were alone and then bent down, his breath tickling my neck as he spoke into my ear.

"I need you to watch your back around Horace,"

"Horace? He's an old bat, Aaron. The crypt keeper-"

He pushed me against the wall. "He can't be trusted."

I laughed, pushing against him. "I doubt he remembers anything he overhears,"

"Maeve, listen to me," he said, deadly serious. I stiffened, not liking his tone. "Do not say anything about Gemma and Ernest in front of him, alright?"

"Okay..."

"Do you understand? Nothing, not a word,"

"I said OKAY!" My eyes flashed with annoyance as I tried to side-step away from him, but he put his hands on the wall on either side of me, blocking me from moving.

"Now go upstairs and change."

I snorted with mirth, pushing against his arm with my shoulder. "Who do you think you are, bossing ME around? You're the one who needs to change. Unless you want to meet the Alpha of Greenbriar in that." I motioned toward his tiny shorts, MY shorts, and arched my brow in a challenging expression. I was too worked up with his revelation about Ernest's dilemma and the idea of meeting the infamous Alpha of Greenbriar to take Aaron's almost patriarchal demeanor seriously.

"I'm not going with you."

"What? Ernest said,"

"I have no doubt that you can handle a quick tour of the village by yourself." He pushed up from the wall and turned to walk away, looking over his shoulder to sneer, "Don't follow me, Maeve, I know what you're thinking."

I had, in fact, stepped forward to follow him, but I brought my foot back down, my toes stepping from when he crunched down on them with his heel. He looked down at my feet, his lips pursed in a frown. "I'm sorry I stepped on you; I didn't have another way to get you to stop talking."

I scowled, then pushed past him and headed for the stairs. I expected him to follow, but he didn't. His footsteps echoed against the stone tile in the western corridor before he abruptly stopped walking and turned around, heading back toward the stairwell. I looked over the railing as he came into view, his eyes shining with mirth as he looked up at me.

"What?" I said, narrowing my eyes at him.

"I'll see you tonight," he said with a devilish smirk. I liked teasing Aaron much better than serious Aaron, but his words made me stiffen with nerves.

"Why?"

"Round two," he smiled, tipping his head in farewell and then disappearing down the corridor.