

Kings Breeder 340

Sold As The Alpha King's Breeder Chapter 340

Chapter 120: Something's wrong with Her

Rowan

The castle was abuzz with its usual day-to-day activities. Servants and maids passed me in the hallway carrying baskets of laundry and trays of tea. I could hear the clattering of cookware as I left my office and walked toward the grand staircase off the foyer, seeing the door to the servants' hallway that led to the kitchen slightly ajar.

It was nearing lunch, and I was definitely hungry. I stopped to let a maid pass by with a tray full of sandwiches and coffee, heading toward the library.

"For Miss Kacidra," she said, bobbing her head as she noticed my gaze.

I nodded back, tucking my hands in my pockets as I followed the maid down the hallway toward the library.

Kacidra was seated at the long library table in the center of the room. She was peering down at a large textbook, her brow knitted in concentration. She looked up with a smile as the maid approached with the lunch tray, but she arched her brow as I entered behind the maid.

"Don't distract me, Rowan," she said with a laugh before giving the maid her thanks. Kacidra leaned back in her chair and bit into a sandwich.

I pulled one of the chairs out from the table and sat down, taking a deep, restorative breath before grabbing a sandwich

288 Vouchers

for myself.

"Want some coffee? You look like you could use it!" she asked.

"I didn't get too much sleep last night," I sighed, accepting the steaming cup of coffee from Kacidra. Kacidra snorted with mirth, bringing the coffee to her lips and sipping cautiously.

"Ouch, that's hot-"

"Don't you have class today?" I asked, motioning toward the mountain of books she had strewn across the table. She bit into her sandwich, flipping through the pages of her textbook for a moment before she met my eyes again, shrugging.

"I had class this morning. I have lab this afternoon, though. A test, so it's a short class. I'll be home before dinner."

Kacidra was in her first year of medical school at the University of Mirage. She was studying to be a physician with the intent of going home to Red Lakes and setting up a practice there, something she said

was desperately needed. Kacidra was sharp as a tack, and she seemed to be enjoying her studies. And Pete, well, I had never met anyone so devoted to their mate.

Her studies meant Kacidra and Pete would be living in Mirage for several years, and I had offered them residence at the castle.

Pete's mother, a spirited older woman named Debby, was also living at the castle, but had insisted on being given a job while she remained under our roof. Debby had been given the task of tending to the hundreds of plants in the atrium, many of the plants native to the Isles where she was from, and all and all, the family seemed content.

Kacidra's presence was also a huge comfort to Hanna.

Especially now. Hanna could use all of the comfort she could get.

"How is Hannah doing?" Kacidra asked, her voice a whisper edged with concern.

I pursed my lips, toying with my coffee mug before I met Kacidra's eye. I couldn't bring myself to answer that question, so I only shrugged my shoulders. I needed to figure out some way to express myself better, but I didn't have the words at the moment.

She dropped it. Kacidra gave me a knowing look, her eyes gazing into mine in search of the overwhelming anxiety I felt regarding everything that was going on with my immediate family.

"I wonder where everyone else is," I muttered, taking another sip of my coffee. Everyone had gotten in just a few days ago.

"Maeve and Troy will probably be down here in the next couple of minutes, I expect. They all seem tired after such a long ride on the train"

"The train?" I asked, setting my mug on the table. I had no idea they'd ridden the train into town. Shows how much attention I'd been paying to everyone else in the family recently.

"Troy would have taken the car, but Maeve wanted to take the boys on the train, you know. They're basically toddlers now,

Rowan. All little boys love trains."

I nodded, unable to stop myself from smiling. Charlie, Will, and Oli were ten months old, and until they'd arrived a few days ago, I hadn't seen them since Maeve and Troy left to start their new lives as the Alpha and Luna of Poldesse. It was so great to have them around, and Will in particular seemed to really like me.

Gemma and Ernest had flown down with my parents and their son George, who was just two months older than Maeve's sons.

A moment later, the library door opened and more of our family members poured in, as if they were fully aware of the thoughts I'd just had and I'd summoned them. I pushed aside my notions regarding how stressful all of this was.

Maeve stepped into the library and looked around. She hadn't been in this room yet since she arrived just a few days ago.

"Good Goddess, Rowan. You haven't changed a thing. I thought you said you wanted to modernize the place?" Maeve said as she held Oli in her arms. Charlie had his arms wrapped around her leg, resting his bottom on her foot and refusing to let go. She looked frazzled but happy. Mostly frazzled.

"I've been exceedingly busy," I quipped, forcing a smile on my face as I glanced over at them. Will toddled over to me, and I reached down to scoop him up. I began to bounce Will on my knee. He squealed with laughter at the motion, his dark brown curls bouncing up and down.

Will and Charlie both looked like Troy and were very hard to tell apart. They were identical, but Charlie was slightly bigger

than Will and had a totally different personality. Will was loud and demanding, while Charlie was quiet and laid-back.

Oliver, little Oli, was wild and fearless. As Maeve looked around the library, he sprinted away from her on all fours toward the ladder at the far end of the library.

He looked like her; copper blond hair and a lean build. He was slightly shorter than his brothers and had a fairer complexion.

But he had something the other boys didn't have; his father's eyes. One was blue, much like Maeve's and my own. And the other was a dark, steel gray. He was an interesting looking creature, and by the looks of it, was keeping Maeve and Troy on their toes.

As if my thoughts had summoned him, Troy walked through the library doors, and a chorus of excited "Dada!" rang out through the air as the boys made their way to their father like they hadn't seen him in months when it had really just been a few moments.

I set Will down on the carpet, and he immediately took off on his hands and knees, crawling across the floor at a rate of speed I found shocking.

Charlie too was crawling still, but Oli was running, damn near sprinting toward his father.

Oli had been the smallest baby I had ever seen in my entire life. He shouldn't have survived, and likely wouldn't have had divine intervention not saved his life. Despite it all, he was thriving.

And I had a sneaking suspicion he was going to be a force to be reckoned with.

Troy scooped all three boys into his arms as he walked over to the set of couches near the hearth. He casually dumped the boys on the couch, much to their delight, and sat down.

"So? Where is she?" Troy asked as he fielded the advances of the boys, who were tugging on his shirt and climbing over him.

"Hanna?" I replied stupidly. I flushed.

"Leave it alone, Troy," Maeve was scanning a bookshelf, her

fingers lingering on a particular novel. She pulled it from the shelf, glancing at me out of the corner of her eye.

A commotion rang out in the hallway, and suddenly, Gemma and Ernest appeared, George toddling ahead of them into the library as he clutched a toy dinosaur to his chest.

"Hello, everyone!" Gemma cried, going over to toss her arms around Maeve while Ernest came over to the couches, clapping Troy on the shoulder.

"There you are, Rowan!" Ernest shook my hand then pulled me off the couch into a tight hug. I hadn't seen much of him since they'd gotten here. But he stilled, then pulled away, searching my face. "I know that look. What's the matter?"

Before I could answer him, I looked over toward the doorway. Mom was standing there, and I saw her face fall as she realized Hanna was not in the library with the rest of the family. Her eyes settled on mine, and I gave her a look that silently pled for help.

"Rowan," Maeve said as Mom entered the library, Dad coming along with her, his hand wrapped around Mom's "We don't want to pry. But we've noticed that something is going on.

You seem upset and distant. We are all here to help. That was our reason for coming. But we can't help you if you don't open up to us."

Kacidra joined in the conversation. "Maeve is right, Rowan. We need to know what's happening with you and Hanna, or else we'll never be able to help."

Rosalie's voice was calm and supportive as she asked, "Is it Hanna that's troubling you, son? Is she doing all right?"

My first instinct was to tell them that everything is fine. I'd spent most of my life trying to prove that I was a strong, capable man, able to handle whatever was thrown in my direction. But looking at all of the concerned faces around me, I realized now was as good a time as any to tell them the truth of the situation.

"Actually, if I'm completely honest with all of you," I began, "Hanna... she's... no. No, she's not all right," I breathed, slouching against the couch. "There's something you all need to know--"

With that, I silently stood and led them all up the stairs to the bedroom. It would be easier for me to show them than to tell them.

As quietly as possible, I opened the bedroom door, my eyes falling on her immediately.

A girl, born during the peak of a full lunar eclipse. A blood moon.

She was beautiful. Hanna had picked the name, but she wouldn't explain to me why she had chosen it.

There was something special about this baby. it was impossible to deny, especially when you held her, and looked into those moon-like eyes and ran your fingers through the fine, white-silk of her hair.

| slipped silently into our room, where the curtains were drawn against the pale light of the overcast autumn day. The baby was wide awake, moving her tiny limbs as though in slow motion.

I walked around the bed, looking down into the bassinet with a soft smile as the infant stopped moving, sensing someone nearby. Everyone else paused out in the hallway.

“Hey, honey,” I cooed, reaching into the bassinet and gently lifting her into my arms.

She fussed momentarily, rooting against my chest in search of milk.

She felt weightless in my arms. Her eyes were wide, her pale silver irises staring up at the ceiling and antique light fixtures.

I carried her toward the stained-glass window, letting the multi-colored beams rain down over us for a moment. My

daughter’s eyes widened.

“That’s you, I think,” I said, pointing to the white wolf in the center of the glass, the Moon Goddess in her wolf form. I half

expected her to confirm this notion, speaking to me in a woman’s voice instead of soft, guttural infantile coos.

But she only turned to look at me, watching the multi-colored beams of sun dance across my face. She pinkened, then burped. Loudly.

“Very impressive,” I smiled, adjusting her weight so I held her against my shoulder, patting her back.

My mother came in behind me. “Oh, look at her. So sweet! Can Thelp you with anything?”

The offer was kind. My eyes shifted to the other form in the room, in the bed. I let out a sigh. “We probably need to get a bottle. I don’t want to bother her.”

“Of course, there’s some breastmilk in the freezer. I’ll go down and get her a bottle.” Rosalie’s eyes went to Hanna as well. “What about Hanna?” Her question picked up where our conversation downstairs had let off.

Hanna was really, really struggling. She had barely said a word to anyone since our daughter’s birth. I regretted not going against her wishes of not making a big deal out of the birth and having my mother present. She had needed her, despite Hanna’s objections. She needed her now.

She was unwell, and I couldn’t do anything about it.

“We’re going to be okay,” I said to my mom, but more to myself. “We’re going to figure this out. All of it.”

My mother gave me a knowing nod. “I believe you will, Rowan.” With her hand on my shoulder, I looked at my wife and wondered if she would ever be her old self again.