

Chapter 131 Desperation

Aero

I went back to the castle with high hopes of the future: me, Serena, our children, and Elijah, Rhea and their children, living, surrounded by love, and running the kingdom in harmony and peace. It was the best vision of the future I could ever hope for.

This was what I held onto to keep me sane; to keep me from trashing the whole castle or the mountains of Phanteon.

When Elijah and I still talked, like a big brother, I concealed the chaos brewing inside me. I didn't want him to worry. I didn't want him to see how on edge I was with all these revelations popping in one day.

But now, as I stood alone inside my chamber, the walls started to close in on me. I gripped the cushion of my sofa and with my retracted claws, tore some of it out and tossed it into the burning logs. The blazing fire thereafter covered the entire hearth. The flames matched my mood. I stared and stared at it until I realized I wanted to hear my wife's voice.

'How are you doing there?' I asked.

'Excellent, my king,' was her quick answer.

Again, I tried to hide my troubled emotions, but Serena, as perceptive as she was, noticed it, but she didn't press further. I was glad she gave me space. She was bound to know everything anyway by tomorrow when she returns to Phanteon.

My mood somehow lifted after talking to her, but that didn't mean I had a good sleep that night. I tossed and turned, not only because Serena wasn't with me, but because memories of my past kept playing inside my head. Worse was getting a dream about my younger self running through a dark hole, crying, and searching for my real mother. This dream was a first, and I linked it all to the writings of my father.

When daybreak came, I transformed into my wolf form and ran towards Cydan. Serena was yet to attend the guardian ascension ceremony this day, so I had time to investigate further about my father's accounts.

He mentioned about the Bastion pack in his diary. Under my rule now, I only have fourteen packs and Bastion wasn't one of them. Surely, Alpha Edmond could bring me light about this one.

When I arrived there, I found Lady Georgia tending to her garden.

"Your Majesty, we weren't informed you would visit again," she exclaimed as she picked herself up and lowered her head.

“I need to talk to your husband. Where is he?” was my reply. My eyes kept wandering, feeling for his presence inside and around the house, yet I couldn’t sense him.

“He is out hunting, Your Majesty,” she clarified. It made sense. “Shall I call for him?”

“No, I’ll track him myself,” I said as I ran. I know it was rude of me to leave her that fast, but I was turning impatient now. My kilometers of run from the castle to Cydan resulted to that.

Using Alpha Edmond’s scent, I tracked him in the inner forest, in his wolf form, fresh from a kill.

The wild boar was sprawled on the ground, lifeless and bloody. When he saw me approach in two legs, he changed into his human form. We could still mind-link when in our wolf counterpart, but this way, it was more convenient.

“Your Majesty, this is a surprise,” he rose and released his prey.

“I need your help again,” I huffed. My stomach suddenly growled. It reminded me that I haven’t eaten breakfast yet, but I just ignored it.

“I’m always ready to help you, Your Highness,” he answered.

I didn’t delay. I went straight ahead to my purpose for visiting him.

“I found my father’s diary yesterday. You could say I am wiser now when it comes to my family’s

twisted past.”

His accommodating expression turned a dial sadder.

“I’m sorry to hear that, Your Majesty,” he said and lowered his eyes on the forest floor.

“Tell me about the Bastion pack. My father mentioned it in my writings. It does not exist under my rule now. Why?”

He didn’t look surprised when I said this. He just remained silent and sported a neutral face. I continued instead.

“I am aware that Phanteon used to have twenty formidable packs. And I am aware I only have fourteen now because the rest became the rogue packs in the kingdom. Like you said, they rebelled against my father’s changes to the system and the mating belief. What I want to know is if Bastion is one of these rogue packs and if it still exists until now.”

“Bastion is one of the ancient packs, Your Majesty,” he corrected.

My mind immediately highlighted the word ‘ancient.’

“Before Phanteon was created, before using the Sam’rha native flower to categorize the packs, the werewolf and lycan kind had more than twenty.

These ancient packs either combine with another pack or they dismantle and wither. Bastion is one of the popular ancient packs, but you could say

it was a rogue pack too because their alpha disliked the ways of your father.”

“Ancient packs...” I mused, knotting my brows and clenching my jaw. How was I not educated about this? The most famous professor in Phanteon, Gerard de Patria, who also taught Serena about our history and tradition, taught me all I know. Why didn’t we cover this?

“Let me guess, my father changed history too; erased the existence of these ancient packs to fit his rule in Phanteon.”

“Hm, not really, Your Majesty.” He was quick to correct again. I couldn’t be more confused.

“It is just a case of forgotten history,” was his simple reply. “Millenniums had passed. Everything that happened pre-Phanteon and pre-creation of the realms had become just writings on history books, and these books themselves had been neglected over centuries. Gerard said so himself: teaching this ancient history is a headache. Might as well stick to the well-known one and that is after Phanteon was created and we started using the Sam’rha flower.”

I studied his reasoning and yes, hell, it was a headache. Let me be selfish by saying I care nothing about history, about what it was like before Phanteon existed. I knew the different kingdoms,

especially my kingdom, already existed before the realms were created; before the corresponding borders, walls, and portals took shape; before the pillars supported these borders; before the first leaders constructed these pillars with their own strengths; before the guardians existed and supervised these pillars.

One world, with already existing kingdoms which, eventually, was divided by walls—this was the simplest analogy I could think of, but still, heck, it was too much to chew on.

“So Bastion...” I decided to return to the topic I wanted clarified, “does it still exist until now?”

“No, Your Majesty,” Alpha Edmond replied. “The pack dissolved the moment their alpha was killed,”—he paused, cleared his throat and continued—“by your father.”

Why am I not surprised?

“You remember that rogue pack leader I told you about who I befriended? The one who was very vocal with his quest for righteousness about the mating system? That’s him. Your father wanted him silenced.”

Fuck. My family history is one web of mystery, lies, and killings.

“Serena said that his mate was that old servant in Halcyon’s house,” I exclaimed when I

remembered Serena's words. I met that old woman too and at first glance, she was one harmless, insignificant woman.

"Yes, Your Majesty. Her name is Sharon," Alpha Edmond answered. "She's the luna of the Bastion pack and they had a daughter."

By the mere mention of that word, my ears perked up. This was exactly what I hoped to hear: a clue about my real mother.

"Do you know where their daughter is now?" I kept my voice controlled. Alpha Edmond didn't have a clue yet as to why I was inquiring about her. Maybe when I sort out this mess, then that's the time I would be confident to share everything to my alphas.

He shook his head and sighed. "I don't know, Your Majesty. She's dead, I think. Otherwise, Sharon wouldn't be in Alchidna. She would have been with her daughter, rebuilding their lost pack."

Fuck again. Somehow I felt my heart prick while hearing it.

"Do you want to see where I buried Alpha Jenson's body?" Alpha Edmond offered.

Jenson. That was the name of my grandfather. My blood.

I wanted to visit his tomb. He was family after all, but heck, now wasn't the time.

“No. I want to see Sharon,” I clearly stated. Seeing this old woman might lead me to seeing my real mother.

I hope.

With a nod, I left Alpha Edmond with his wild boar.

He must have noticed my desperate actions.

He must even pity me for being like this.

I couldn't blame him.

I pitied myself too.

Me. A grown man. An Alpha King, even. Trying to find a mother who may or may not be dead.

Asking for help from others because my poor ass couldn't find her myself through our bond.

By the time I arrived in Alchidna, Alpha Russel saw me. I asked him immediately about the whereabouts of the old woman. He was clueless at first who I was talking about, but then I used her name.

“Sharon.”

His eyes instantly brightened with recognition. “Oh! In here, we call her Grandma Sharon because she's the kindest woman to serve us and the best cook too!” he exclaimed.

Silence was my reply to his introduction of her.

“You can find her in the hills there, Your Majesty.”

He pointed to the west where grassy hills were located. “She usually picks herbs this time of morning.”

“Thank you,” was my curt reply before I ran to that specific location.

Like Alpha Russel said, the old woman was indeed picking herbs. She looked peaceful and unguarded. She even wore a hat that was too frilly and too big for her heart-shaped, wrinkled face.

I decided to approach her, but then I stopped a few feet away from her when she muttered these words:

“I had hoped we wouldn’t see each other again.”

My brow arched up. So she knew... Hell.

“Your acting was superb. You fooled me well, old woman,” I replied.

She scoffed, rose to her feet and faced me. “Is that how you address your grandmother?”

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