

Chapter 46

Elliot

"My pack is fine," she said. "I'm here to help you like we agreed upon."

"And I appreciate your help as always. But I don't think I'll need it today. I have meetings I need to take care of—"

"I know," she said, handing me a planner. "I took it upon myself to organize your meetings for today. I'll sit in on them and make sure there's no funny business. These other Alpha's can't be as trusted. Especially the Alpha from the Stormwind pack."

The Alpha from the Stormwind pack was Silver's father; I couldn't agree more. He couldn't be trusted. But right now, we needed alliances to help protect our packs from these rogue attacks. We were all dealing with the same issue, and it was time we came together and resolved the problem.

I nodded my thanks to Shirley and she gave me a small smile as I took my seat at the desk.

She walked around my desk, and I felt her hands on my shoulders. I immediately tensed at her touch; my wolf scowled, and I had to fight back the growl that emerged from my throat. Something about the way she was touching me... or maybe it was just her touch in general, I did not like.

"You are so tense, Elliot. Remember when we used to go to parties together and everyone thought we were the cutest couple," she said, chuckling.

I shrugged her hands off my shoulders.

"We were never a couple," I told her, my voice turning cold.

"I know that, but they didn't," she said. "We were voted the best couple by our peers. Don't you ever wonder what it would be like to actually be a couple?"

"No," I told her, my voice coming out short. "We have always just been friends, Shirley. Plus, I'm married. It would be a waste of time to think of such things."

She rolled her eyes and sighed as she leaned against the desk, facing me.

"You can't be serious about that marriage, Elliot," she said, folding her arms across her chest, and pushing up her breasts in the process. I didn't make it a point to notice; I just stared at her face, not wanting to discuss this any further but Shirley was stubborn, and I knew she wasn't going to drop the subject. "She's not good enough for you..."

"She's my wife and the Luna of this pack, Shirley. I won't tolerate disrespect. Speak about her again, and we will have an issue," I told her.

She opened her mouth to respond, but thankfully Beta Leo interrupted when he knocked on the door.

"If you'll excuse me; I have meetings I need to tend to. Sit in them if you'd like, but keep Silver's name out of your mouth."

She looked stunned but she said nothing more on the subject.

By the time I got home later in the evening, I was exhausted. I went to my bedroom first, hoping that Silver was there getting ready for bed. But when I saw that the bedroom and bathroom were empty, I decided to check her studio instead.

I could feel her presence behind the door before I opened it.

Silver was seated at her stool, hard at work with her painting. I leaned against the doorframe, watching her as she worked tirelessly. I wondered if she even left this stupid at all today.

Her clothes were covered in watercolor, and she had paint smeared all over her face.

It made a smile twitch at the corner of my lips when I saw sweat, mixed with different colored watercolors, trailing down the nape of her neck, right along the red markings that I left on her skin last night.

She never looked more attractive to me.

Chapter 47

Silver

"Silver!! You made it!" Cara said, jumping up from her seat on the back patio of the packhouse and rushing toward me. Her arms outstretched as she wrapped me in her arms. I wasn't used to others, besides Rebecca, hugging me, so I wasn't entirely sure what to do.

I awkwardly patted her on the back, plastering a smile on my lips. Truth be told, I wasn't going to come to the packhouse today. Yesterday, I was called by the manager of Hope's Gallery, wanting to have a meeting this week about featuring my portraits in their new exhibit. I've worked tirelessly all night creating perfect pieces for this exhibit.

This morning, I was exhausted and didn't expect Cara, who retrieved my number from Gamma Erik, her mate, to ask me to brunch at the packhouse. I wasn't much of a brunch person, but I suppose now that I'm a Luna, it's something I should get used to.

"Thanks for the invitation," I said as she released me.

She looped her arm through mine and pulled me over to her friends who were munching on mini sandwiches and sipping on wine. Emma gave me a small smile while Alison gave me a noncommittal glance. I sat down on one of the lounge chairs, putting my glasses on to shield my eyes from the sun.

"So, Silver. Tell us how you met our Alpha. We are dying to know," Cara dug right into the investigation. I looked at them and saw that they were all staring at me.

What was I supposed to say? What was Elliot telling people? I wanted to make sure my story matched with his. I didn't think he'd want me to tell people the full truth; especially those I just met.

"We met how anyone would meet," I said, shrugging casually. "At a bar."

They all looked at one another.

"Our Alpha was casually at a bar?" Cara asked, her eyes wide with curiosity. "He's not a very casual guy."

"I heard he used to have a party streak," Alison shrugged, leaning back in her seat. "It doesn't surprise me that he'd go to a bar."

"A party streak?" Cara asked, her mouth nearly hitting the ground.

Alison glanced at her friend and nodded.

"You've only been in his pack for a little over a year, so you didn't know him back when his father was an Alpha," Alison stated simply.

I raised my brows at her words.

"His father?" I asked. I hadn't seen his father at all since I'd been here; or his mother. It made me wonder where his parents were. "What happened to his father?"

They stopped eating and looked at me like I had just grown another head. I blinked, confused by their demeanor changes.

"You're married to him and you don't know about his father?" Alison asked, disbelief displayed on her face.

I bit my lower lip, chewing on it nervously.

"It never came up," I admitted. "He doesn't know much about my family either. Other than the fact that my father is the Alpha of the Stormwind pack."

"Well, Alpha Elliot's father was a fierce leader," Alison started to explain. She paused to look around for a moment as if she was worried others might overhear her. Then she leaned in closer to me, dropping her voice to a whisper.

"He was killed by his own Beta," she whispered.

I gasped, covering my mouth with my hands.

"I only got here less than a year ago and even I heard of this story," Cara said, shaking her head with dismay on her face. "It's known around the region about Alpha Albert."

"Alpha Albert?"

"Elliot's father," Alison said, rolling her eyes. "It's a popular story around the region. We are just surprised you didn't hear about it. Especially considering you are an Alpha's daughter. I thought you'd be in the loop."

My frown deepened; my father made it a point to keep me out of the loop. It didn't surprise me that I had never heard about this. I wondered if Rebecca heard about this and made a mental note to ask her later. "How could an Alpha be murdered by his own Beta?" I asked, shaking my head at the thought. "A Beta is supposed to be the most trusted ally to the Alpha."

It doesn't make any sense. Did they do it for power? Where's this Beta now?"

"We thought originally he had done it for power," Alison said thoughtfully. "But that ended up not being the case. Maybe it was at first. But the guilt of it was too much for him to handle so he killed himself." I gasped again, my eyes large with alarm.

"What?!" I exclaimed.

"Yeah," Alison said, leaning back in her seat and biting into her sandwich. "Pretty intense."

"What about his mother? Where was she during all of this?" I asked, still trying to wrap my head around this information.

"She died when Alpha Elliot was a baby. We aren't sure the exact cause of her death." That time it was Emma who answered. She was quiet up until that moment, but I suppose Cara warned that she was the quiet one. "He has a sister though. She doesn't live around here. She's a famous priestess. Charlotte Crown."

Chapter 48

Silver

I had heard about Charlotte; she has the power to see into the future and the past. She's a priestess of the Moon Goddess and debarked on a journey to travel the world a few years ago. I hear she doesn't come around here

that often, but Elliot is still in touch with her. Though I had never seen him on the phone with her and he had never actually brought her up to me. But it's known that they were close at one point.

As the afternoon continued, we traveled into lighter topics. They asked me about my occupation, what I like to do for fun, my favorite type of flowers, my favorite color, and even my favorite foods. They truly wanted to get to know me; as time went on, even Alison started to warm up to me.

In return, I learned a lot about them as well. Emma and Alison grew up in this pack and know all of the tea that goes on around town. Cara grew up as the Beta daughter in the Howling pack a few hours away from here. She was traveling with her father and Alpha for business to this pack when she met Gamma Erik and found out he was her mate.

That was a little over a year ago and she's been here ever since. She has a good relationship with her family, and they still talk all the time. Because of their joining, they have a pretty strong alliance with the Howling pack.

We shared many laughs and memories, and it was a pretty good day. I told them about my best friend Rebecca and suggested we all hang out together.

"I need to use the restroom," I said, standing to my feet.

"Use the one upstairs. The one downstairs is being worked on," Emma warned.

"Thanks," I said as I walked into the packhouse.

I found the stairway and made my way up the stairs and into the bathroom. Once I finished, I left the bathroom and headed back to the stairs, but I paused when I saw Shirley walking up the stairway. Her eyes flashed to me, and an alarmed look crossed her face before it morphed into a smirk.

"Mrs. Stormwind. What brings you here?" She asked, raising her brows as she reached the top step.

"I was just using the restroom," I told her. "I'm having brunch with a few ladies from the pack. Also, it's Mrs. Crown. Or Luna Crown."

I started to walk around her, but she put her hand out, stopping me in my tracks.

"It won't be Mrs. Crown for long. Once Elliot comes to his senses, he will divorce you. He's just confused right now but it won't last forever." "What makes you sure of this Miss Shirley?" I asked her, raising my brows. "He didn't seem very confused last night when we made love."

It was a bold statement, but once the words left my lips, there was no taking them back. Her face grew impossibly red, and she looked furious.

"You are lying," she said, folding her arms across her chest as she stared at me. "Elliot wouldn't touch you with a ten-inch pole. He told me himself that the marriage was for convenience. It's nothing more than a contract. What's he's done with you; he'll divorce you and marry me like it should have been a long time ago."

The memory of Elliot and Shirley talking in his office invaded my mind. My cheeks warmed at the thought of him admitting to another woman that his marriage with me was only a contract. But I had no reason to not believe her based on what I heard him saying and there was no other way she would know this information.

I squared my shoulders, not allowing her to see me break.

"It might be a contract but that doesn't mean love can't develop down the line. Don't be too quick to mark your claim on Alpha Elliot, Miss Shirley," I told her coolly.

Her mouth nearly fell open and as I walked around her, she grabbed my arm forcefully, I winced at the strength of her hand wrapped around my wrist, knowing it was going to leave a mark.

"You bitch," she hissed.

She began to pull me toward the stairwell and panic started to rise in my chest as I struggled against her. "What are you going to do? Throw me down the stairs? Is that really the image you want?" I asked, breathlessly. She paused for a moment and then a grin spread across her lips.

Then she spoke loudly, "Mrs. Crown, I don't want to come between you and your husband! Please don't!!!!"

Confusion slammed into me as my brows pinched together and then to my utter disbelief. She released her hold on me, and she fell backward down the stairs.

Chapter 49

Silver

I was shocked when I watched Shirley hurl herself down the stairs. She landed with a loud thud on the granite floor, and I swear I heard a crack from the impact. Shirley cried out in pain, tears streaking down her cheeks and mascara smearing in the process.

I stood at the top of the stairwell, my mouth hanging open and my eyes wide. I never imagined that Shirley would actually throw herself down the stairs like that! What on earth was she thinking?

It didn't register with me what was happening until the crowd started to gather. They all asked what happened and how Shirley ended up on the

ground crying like she was in a lot of pain. None of them noticed me at the top of the stairs until Elliot ran around the corner, shoving himself through the crowd, barking at them to step away from her.

Shirley was whimpering and crying as he knelt over her; I could see the look of concern and worry all over his face. He wiped the tears from her eyes, trying to move the damp strands of hair stuck to her features as she whimpered and trembled.

"Shirley, what happened?" He asked, her voice soothing and compassionate. It was a tone I had never heard him use before and despite the situation, a jealous knot formed in the pit of my stomach. I quickly shook that feeling away though because it was ridiculous. Shirley was hurt and I'm over here being jealous that Elliot is treating her compassionately.

I truly am deranged.

"I...I..." Shirley whimpered as more tears fell from her eyes. "I just wanted to... apologize... to... Silver," she cried, her bottom lip trembling. "And...she...she...." Shirley broke off, bawling her eyes out as she clung to Elliot's shirt. "She... pushed me...." she cried.

Gasping erupted around the foyer, and everyone looked at one another as the murmurs began.

"Did Alpha Elliot's new wife do this out of jealousy?"

"So bold for the Luna to harm Alpha Shirley like this. What was she thinking?"

"The Alpha will certainly divorce her now!"

My mind was whirling, and I was frozen at the top of the stairwell, not sure I heard her correctly. Was she really blaming me for her fall? I didn't push her at all; in fact, it seemed like she was going to push me, but then decided to hurl herself down the stairs. Why would she blame me for such a thing?

I had no words, and I could hardly move.

Shirley's mischief eyes flickered to me as her lip trembled.

"How could you push me, Silver?" She asked, her voice booming across the foyer, making everyone silent as they turned to look at me, finally noticing me at the top of the stairs. Elliot's eyes darkened as he glared up at me; his face was indifferent and sent a chill down my spine.

He didn't believe this, did he?

"I just wanted to apologize, Elliot," Shirley whimpered, burying her face in his chest. "I didn't mean to upset her. She told me I was ruining her marriage and then she shoved me."

Elliot's eyes never left mine; I stared at him with disbelief on my face and he looked at me with disgust. I cowardly into myself, hating the feeling of his scrutiny.

"I... I think my leg is broken," Shirley cried.

That seemed to bring Elliot back to the current moment and I watched as he wrapped his arms around this woman and held her close to his chest. He buried his face in her hair and whispered soothing things to her.

"It's okay, Shirley. I'll take care of you. You are safe now. No need to cry," he whispered, rubbing circles around her back.

"Please get me out of here..." Shirley cried. "I'm so embarrassed and I don't want to be around anyone else."

Elliot lifted her into his arms, cradling her close to his chest. She cried out and winced in pain from the movement of her leg. I could see how bruised; she was a strong Alpha wolf so I knew that even if it was broken, it would heal in no time. But still, Shirley trembled and cried in Elliot's chest.

He didn't bother sparing me another look as he left with Shirley in his arms.

I stared at them, frozen to my spot.

"Luna, are you all right?" A voice sounded from nearby and when I blinked, I noticed Beta Leo staring up at me.

He was at the bottom of the stairs and the gammas were busy breaking up the crowd, forcing them to leave the scene.

"Have you been harmed in any way?" He asked, narrowing his eyes.

I shook my head, trying to bring myself out of my stupor.

"No..." I told him. "I'm not hurt."

He nodded.

"Would you like me to take you home?"

I shook my head, blinking away the tears that formed in my eyes.

"Not necessary," I told him as I quickly walked down the stairs. "Thank you."

He looked uncertain, but he didn't stop me from leaving. I quickly rushed out of the packhouse. Elliot's car was already gone; my heart felt like it was about to explode in my chest. I wanted to scream out and cry. I couldn't believe that just happened and I couldn't believe he blindly believed her like that.

Chapter 50

Silver

This was Shirley's plan; she's trying to turn Elliot against me so he will divorce me. I wrapped my arms around my body and held myself close as I walked away from the packhouse. I felt sick to my stomach. I just needed some time and space to clear my head.

My phone rang and when I grabbed it from my pocket, I saw that it was Cara. I declined the call, not wanting to talk to anyone right now. I shoved the phone back into my pocket. Memories of earlier events replayed in my mind, and I winced at the harsh look he gave me. It was accusatory and cold. Like I was a bug that stung him.

I'm not sure how long I walked, but the next thing I knew, I was standing outside of the pack hospital.

Why did I walk here? What was I thinking I'd accomplish?

Taking a deep breath, I walked into the emergency room and over to the reception desk.

"Hello, I'm here to see Shirley Darknight," I said, my voice trembling only slightly.

She typed on her computer and nodded.

"Alpha Elliot reserved floor 8 for her," she told me.

My stomach knotted even more; he reserved an entire floor for her? I nodded my thanks, forcing a smile as I went to the elevator.

I pressed button 8 and held my breath as the doors closed. My heart was pounding against my chest; I had no idea what I was going to say, or do

once I saw them, but I had to say something. I couldn't let this go unresolved; I couldn't let Elliot think he married some kind of monster.

The elevator dinged and the doors opened, revealing a large waiting room.

I walked into the room and smiled at the receptionist.

"Hi, I'm here to see Shirley Darknight," I told her.

"She's down the hall; 2 doors on the right," she told me. "She's with the Alpha."

I nodded and went down the hallway. I could hear voices inside of the room and my chest tightened.

"The doctors say it's going to take me a full day to heal, Elliot. What am I going to do?" I heard Shirley whining.

"It's going to be okay, Shirley," Elliot assured her. "I will take care of everything. You just focus on recovering."

"How could your wife do this to me? I didn't do anything wrong?" Shirley whimpered. "Why would you marry someone like that."

Elliot remained silent; silent!!!

Pressing my lips together to keep from letting out any sobs or sounds of distress, I knocked on the door softly before turning the knob and pushing it open.

Shirley's eyes found mine first and she shrieked with fear, grabbing onto Elliot's arm and shielding herself from me.

"Elliot help! She came back to finish the job!!!"

Elliot's face darkened as he turned to look at me. I stood frozen at the doorway; my head lowered. I couldn't look at the disappointed look on his face anymore. My heart hurt too much already. "Shirley, that's enough. She's not going to hurt her," Elliot said, trying to pry her hands off him,

but she was relentless and kept burying her face in his arm, tears pouring out of her eyes.

"I'm scared, Elliot. Please, make her leave. I don't want her here."

Elliot ran his fingers through his hair and sighed before his eyes found mine.

"You shouldn't have come here, Silver," he said, his voice hard and making me wince. "What do you want?"

"I've come to speak with Miss Shirley," I said, my voice coming out as a raspy whisper.

"She clearly doesn't want to speak to you," he said, his brows furrowed together. "Whatever it is, it can wait."

"I wanted to apologize," I blurted. "I never intended for her to get hurt. I didn't..." my voice trailed off when I realized no matter what I said, Elliot wasn't going to believe me. His mind had been made up. His brows pinched together as he glared at me.

"You didn't what?" He asked.

I shook my head.

"I didn't know she would fall," I told him, my voice wavering.

He opened his mouth to say something, but Shirley interrupted him.

"It's okay, Elliot. I'll speak with her if it's important to her. She seems sincere," Shirley said, batting her lashes at him.

He looked uncertain, which killed me even more inside. But he eventually nodded and stepped away from the bed.

"Okay, I'll be outside if you need me," he told me, squeezing her hand. As he walked by me, he gave me a cold look. "We will talk about this later," he said for my ears alone.

I gave him a curt nod and waited until he left the room.

When I looked back at Shirley, she had stopped crying. She wiped the remaining tears off her face and then looked at me with a cold expression, a mocking smirk placed on her lips as she folded her arms across her chest.

"Let this be a warning to you, Mrs. Crown. You are a temporary wife... Elliot will always choose me over you and this little incident just proved my point."