

Chapter 61

Elliot

What the fuck happened last night? Why was my memory faded and my head in so much pain? It's not like I drank anything besides a couple of beers. It shouldn't have had such a severe effect on me as it had. But here I was, my memory of last night's event practically gone, and a killer headache that made me feel as if I was seriously hung over.

As I came to, a glimpse of Silver's beautiful face came into my mind, and I sighed in contentment. I'm not sure at what point I started to have these real feelings for her, but I knew that my heart and body belonged to her. This wasn't just a marriage of contract for me anymore, this was a marriage, and I was willing to do whatever I could to prove that to her.

It was a strange discovery this morning, but I felt it right in my bones and my wolf hummed with agreement. He had already claimed her in more ways than I could count; though, I won't let him give her the mating mark. Not yet at least, I couldn't force that on her. It had to be a discussion between the two of us and if that's something she wants, I will make it happen. We will proceed with the mating ceremony, and I will mark her as mine. She will wear my mark loud and proud on the nape of her neck for all to see and she will officially be mine in not just the human world, but the wolf world as well.

I opened my eyes and reached over to my lovely wife, wrapping her in my arms and snuggling close to her. The feel of her naked body making my cock twitch and her scent slapping me in the face like an open palm, jolting my senses back to reality.

My entire body felt like it was being scorched to death from her touch and I quickly looked over at her only to get an eye full of scarlet red hair.

I nearly fell out of bed at the sight of this woman in my bed.

No, this wasn't my bed.

I looked around at the unfamiliar setting.

I was in a hotel room.

What the fuck happened? Why was Shirley practically naked in my bed?

I was completely naked, and Shirley lay beneath the covers in only her bra and underpants. My heart cracked immediately, and my body shuddered in disgust and despair.

"Shirley?" I said through my teeth, jolting her awake.

Her eyes flew open, and she sat up, her hair falling over her shoulder and a smile spread across her lips.

"Oh, hey, Elliot," she said sleepily. "Good mor—"

"What the hell are you doing in here, Shirley?" I asked, not letting her finish that sentence. "Where's Silver?"

"Silver?" She asked frowning. "She's not here."

She reached out to touch me, but I jerked her away; I couldn't stand the feel of her hands on me.

I searched around the room, spotting my clothes on the ground. I grabbed my boxers and quickly got them on, followed by my parents, being careful not to reveal myself to Shirley. She remained in the bed, folding her arms across her chest and pouting at me.

"What happened last night??" I demanded, fury rising in me.

"My memory is a little foggy. I think I had a lot to drink. But I remember you saying needed me and wanted to be with me..." she said, her brows furrowed together. "You told me—"

"You are lying," I said, glaring at her. "I would never say such nonsense. I am married, Shirley."

"But you don't love her..."

"You don't know a thing about our marriage," I growled.

Tears welled up in Shirley's eyes and her bottom lip trembled. Shirley had been a long-time friend and seeing her this upset softened me slightly. But not enough to blind me from what happened. I barely had any memory of last night. All I remembered was this frenzy of desires and needing to bury myself inside of Silver. But I never imagined that I would mistake Shirley for Silver.

I shook my head, not wanting to even think about such a thing. There was no way I would mistake Silver for anybody else. I couldn't have...

"I'm sorry, Elliot," Shirley said, tears running down her face. "I only gave you a small dose of a party drug. You always liked it in the past. I took one too thinking it would be fun, like old times. I never imagined that we would ever sleep together though. I'm so sorry."

"A party drug?" I asked her, fixing my glare on her, anger surging through me.

In my late teens and early twenties, I admit I enjoyed taking a party drug every now and again and going clubbing. But I never lost my memories or felt this horrible afterward. I also never woke up in bed with anybody before. I shook my head, running my fingers through my head as I tried to recall what I could of last night.

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"This wasn't my intention, Elliot. You must believe me..." Shirley continued to cry as she grabbed onto my arm.

I pulled away from her, letting her hands fall to the bed beside her and a defeated sob escaped her lips.

"Even so, what makes you think I'd want to take a drug at a business meeting, Shirley?" I asked, shaking my head.

"I thought we could celebrate the new alliances formed last night. The meeting went so well. I miss my old friend; the one who used to go clubbing with me. I just wanted to reminisce and have fun..." Panic consumed me.

Did I really sleep with her last night?

"Silver was here too and she let it happen!" She added quickly.

I froze at her words and narrowed my eyes at her.

"What do you mean Silver was here?"

She sniffled and wiped her tear-filled eyes.

"I believe Beta Leo called her at some point after you started to lose control. She showed up here and she looked frustrated. I offered to take you to the hotel room, and she agreed."

My heart, which was once so full, shattered in a heartbeat.

"Silver let you take me to this room?"

Shirley nodded as more tears filled her eyes.

"I thought we would sleep. I never anticipated this..." she whimpered.

Her words could no longer be heard through my ears because the only thing I could think was, "Silver let this happen?"

Silver

"I must say, Silver. These paintings are incredible. You did these yourself?" Mr. Wilson asked as he went through my portfolio. "Yes, I did," I told him confidently.

"How long have you been working with watercolor?"

"I got into it around middle school. I dabbled with it but didn't take it seriously until I reached high school," I explained.

"You do incredible work," he praised. "I'd like to premier these paintings in our new exhibit. Of course, we will pay you a fair price and a healthy compensation for any artwork that we happen to sell."

He slid over a document.

"I took the liberty of having this contract drawn up. It'll list the payments that will be wired to your account for each painting we exhibit along with the percentage of compensation you will receive," he explained.

I stared at the paper and my brows raised at the numbers I was seeing. It was a pretty fair wage; way more than I could have dreamt. However, I know not to sign any contracts without a lawyer taking a look at them first and I'd also like to include Elliot in this decision-making.

"Would it be okay if I took this contract with me, Mr. Wilson? I'd like my lawyers and husband to take a look at it before I sign anything."

He looked puzzled but he nodded.

"Yes, of course. I wouldn't want you to sign anything that makes you uncomfortable. I understand completely."

I smiled politely at him.

"I truly appreciate your understanding," I told him as I tucked the contract into a folder

After we shook hands, I stood and walked out of the gallery. Almost immediately my phone started to ring. When I glanced at the screen I smiled at Elliot's name, then my cheeks flushed when I remembered the night we had.

Clearing my throat, I swiped the green answer button and pressed the phone to my cheek.

"Hello?"

"Where are you right now?" He asked, his voice sounded distressed, and it caused me to frown.

"I just got finished with a meeting," I told him, my brows furrowed. "Is everything okay?"

"Were you at the hotel last night?"

I was quiet for a moment; did he not remember our night last night? A ping of hurt surfaced in my chest.

"Yes, I was there..."

"So, it's true that you allowed this to happen then?" Elliot snapped, causing me to flinch. His tone was harsh and unfamiliar.

"Elliot, I-"

"I thought you were different, Silver. I thought you were someone I could depend on but instead, you do this? Do I really mean that little to you that you'd allow me to get taken advantage of?" My heart fell deep into my stomach.

He thought I took advantage of him? Perhaps I did.

"No, I-"

"Was it because of our argument the other night?" He asked, cutting me off once again. "Was this your way of getting back at me??"

I gasped at the accusation.

"No, of course not..."

"This innocent act of yours isn't going to work on me anymore. I won't be fooled again," he seethed.

"Elliot-"

Click

The line went dead, and I was left stunned.

What the hell just happened?

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Silver

By the time I returned home, I was a hallow mess. I had no idea what just happened. I couldn't believe that Elliot hung up on me after he yelled at me for taking advantage of him. Tears burned in my eyes, and I wrapped my arms around my body like I was desperately trying to hold myself together.

What was wrong with me?

How could I let things go so far last night? I should have known better than to have sex with him. Then again, he made it difficult to resist. He was in so much control; I would never be able to say no to him and his Alpha power.

Just when I thought we were going to be okay, the rug was ripped out from under my feet.

"Luna," Beta Leo said later in the evening as he walked into the front parlor. "A notice came for you."

I frowned and took it from him. It was addressed to both me and Elliot. I ripped open the sealing and uncovered the letter within the paper.

My mouth nearly fell open at the invitation on the paper. My heart leaped into my throat. Could this be real? Because of my success at the Pandora Bloom auction, I was invited to interview on the Merida Ryder show. That was only one of the most famous talk shows in the world; it was broadcast worldwide and only the most famous people were allowed to interview with her.

I've heard in the past that Elliot has interviewed with her, though I have never seen it before. The letter was addressed to both Elliot and me; Merida wanted us both to be on the show?

My heart slowly fell deep into my stomach, and I could feel my smile falter as I thought about it.

"Luna, is everything okay?" Beta Leo asked. I completely forgot that he was right there, and I jumped at the sound of his voice.

I turned to look at him and forced a smile in his direction, nodding slowly.

"Yeah," I lied. "I just need to make a call."

He looked unsure, but he nodded and stepped away to give me privacy. I grabbed my phone and immediately called Rebecca. She would know what to do.

"Hey, girl," she said immediately. "What's up?"

"I have a problem," I started to say right away.

She went quiet for a moment.

"What's going on?" she asked.

"Well, I have an interview with Merida Ryder on her talk show," I started to explain. I was cut off by Rebeca's shrieking. I pulled the phone away from my ear when she started shrieking and I sighed. I should have known Rebecca would react that way; she was a huge fan of Merida Ryder.

Taking in a deep breath I said, "I'm not finished, Rebecca."

"Sorry, but this is huge. Why would say that's a problem? It's a huge honor, Silver!! Is it because of the auction? I knew you would wow them! Take that, Stella!"

I rolled my eyes, but I couldn't help the smile on my lips. She was right; this was a huge honor.

"That's not the problem," I told her, lowering my tone. "The problem is she wants me to attend the interview with Elliot."

Rebecca was quiet for a moment before she said, "So? I thought things were going well for you and Elliot."

I sighed.

"They are," I told her. "Or at least they were..."

I could practically hear her frown on the other end of the phone.

"They were?" She finally asked, catching onto what I was saying. "They aren't anymore?"

I shook my head, but then remembered she couldn't see me. I closed my eyes and sat on the nearby couch. I was so drained and confused after the events today, that I wasn't even sure how to explain what had happened with Elliot. I wasn't even sure what had happened to him. Leo was

somewhere in this palace and I'm sure he probably found out what he was drugged with by now. I made a mental note to ask him about it later.

"What exactly happened, Silver? Rebecca asked after it was clear I wasn't going to say anything more.

"Something kind of happened last night," I confessed. She waited patiently for me to continue. "He went to an Alpha meeting at the Water Grove Hotel and Restaurant, and he was drugged."

She sucked in a sharp breath immediately.

"What?" She gasped.

"Yeah," I told her. "Beta Leo called me to have me help out so I went there, and we brought him to a hotel thinking it would be better than dragging him all the way home. Once I got him there, he was kind of all over me. Like he couldn't get enough of me..."

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Silver

"Oh, my goddess," she nearly shrieked.

My face reddened even more.

"Yeah," I murmured. "It was the best night of sex I've ever had," I whispered, my voice going hoarse. "Then this morning I had to leave to go to an interview with Hope's Gallery and afterward Elliot called me... yelling at me."

"Yelling at you?" She asked, confused. "What could he be yelling at you for?"

"He told me I took advantage of him," I admitted. "He yelled at me for being a typical woman and not being any different than the others. His words hurt, Rebecca. Maybe he's right... maybe I did go too far. I should have stopped it."

"How exactly do you stop an Alpha wolf?" Rebecca asked, sounding equally confused. "He's an Alpha... if he was that adamant about having you, it would be almost impossible to stop him."

"Yes, I agree," I admitted. "But I'm not sure what else to do. He's so mad at me... but now we have to appear on this show together. I don't think he would want to go..."

"He would be stupid to turn it down," Rebecca told me. "Perhaps it was just a misunderstanding."

Before I could say anything in response, I heard the front door slamming shut. I winced at the forcefulness of the slam, knowing it was Elliot. Taking in a deep breath, I said, "Rebecca, I have to go. He's home."

"Good luck. Call me later and let me know how it went."

"I will," I assured her.

I hung up without another word.

I left the room and walked into the front foyer. Elliot was speaking to Beta Leo, and I watched Leo nodding in response to whatever he was saying before he turned and left the palace.

Elliot's face, though it was handsome, was also stern and void of any emotions. He started to walk away as if he didn't see me even though I was standing in the middle of the foyer. I pressed my lips together, feeling aggravated by his dismissiveness.

"Elliot," I said, trying to catch up to him. He paused once he got to the stairs.

"What?" He asked, his voice distant and harsh; it made me flinch.

I swallowed the lump in my throat and held up the invitation.

"We were invited to appear on the Merida Ryder Talk show to interview," I told him, keeping my gaze fixed on the ground, hating that his back was still turned to me. "I understand if you don't want to go... I just thought that-"

"When is it?"

I was momentarily surprised by his question, and I glanced at the invitation.

"Tomorrow night at 5," I told him, my voice dropping to a low whisper.

He was quiet for a moment, and I thought for sure he would decline the invitation but then he finally spoke and I was shocked even more.

"I'll be there."

Without another word, he left me alone with my thoughts.

For the next day and a half, Elliot had barely spoken to me, and I was aggravated beyond belief. I made it a point to keep a distance from him until we reached the studio a few towns away. Merida Ryder's studio was huge, and we were greeted by a ton of security guards. We were brought into different dressing rooms where we were made to look perfect in front of the camera.

I hated not seeing or speaking to Elliot. My chest felt constricted, and I thought I was going to be sick at different times, but I swallowed it down and kept a fake smile on my lips as I allowed the makeup and hair artists to style me to perfection.

Once I was completely dressed, I took a look at myself and smiled with contentment.

"Are you ready? We will be airing soon."

I nodded and followed one of the producers out of the room. I hadn't met Merida yet; they wanted me to meet her once we got on air so my reaction would be genuine.

Elliot stood near the doorway that led to the stage and when he saw me, his eyes widened, and I saw the look of longing in them. It made my heart hurt. He kept his eyes on me until I was right beside him and after a moment he cleared his throat.

"While we are on the air, at least pretend you care about me, okay?"

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Silver

I stared at my husband in disbelief. Was he seriously telling me to pretend I care about him? As if I didn't already care about him. I folded my arms across my chest and pressed my lips in a thin line as I glared up at him.

"What makes you think I don't already care about you?" I asked him.

He turned to look at me, his eyes narrowed.

"Because you allowed someone to take advantage of me the other night. What am I supposed to think?" He asked through his teeth.

My brows furrowed together.

What was he talking about?

I allowed someone to take advantage of him the other night. I was the only one who was with him until the morning. The hurt expression on his face when he looked at me made my heart ping with pain. Something told me that Rebecca might have been right. There was some kind of misunderstanding that seriously needed to be cleared up. But just as I opened my mouth to speak, the producer returned. "We are about to air," she said, motioning for us to follow her.

Elliot went ahead of me without sparing me another look. I followed behind, wanting to talk to him, but knowing it had to wait until after the interview. There was no way I was going to be able to talk to him right now.

As we stepped on stage, I was bombarded by clapping and cheers. I quickly realized we were in the air and a nervous feeling fell into the pit of my stomach. My mouth fell open at the sight of the crowd before us. I squinted as the lights around the studio nearly blinded me and I tried my best to smile and wave at those who were cheering my name.

Elliot went over to the couch as if he had done this a million times before. Merida Ryder sat on her chair with her leg crossed over the other and a notebook on her lap. She had a bright smile on her lips as she saw Elliot taking a seat.

I sat beside Elliott, trying my best not to look as awkward as I felt.

Once the clapping died down, Merida made her introductions and spoke to the audience with grace. I couldn't help but steal glances up at Elliot who wore a stern expression. I hated that he was upset with me. I shook the thought out of my mind and focused on Merida who was smiling at me.

"I'm so glad to finally meet you, Silver," Merida said, holding her hand out to shake mine. "I must say, I saw your painting at the auction, and I was blown away. It was incredible. How did you convince Alpha Elliot to pose that long for your portrait?"

I looked at Elliot who appeared relaxed and content on the couch. He was gazing down at me with a loving expression, and it made me relax a bit. I smiled at him before looking back at Merida.

"It was easy. Elliot would do anything I ask him," I teased, wrapping my arms around his arms. "He's quite tentative to his wife."

Merida chuckled.

"It appears he is. You must tell us, how did you two meet?"

"It's actually quite a boring story. We met at a bar and Elliot was the one who approached me first. He had a kind smile and he wanted to dance with me, so I took his hand and let him guide me to the dance floor. My heart fell fast for him," I said, a small blush appearing on my cheeks as I spoke about Elliot.

This story wasn't completely the truth but telling them the full truth would only make us both look bad.

Elliot surprised me by taking my hand and entwining our fingers together, giving me a small yet reassuring smile.

"She was and still is the most beautiful woman I had ever seen in my life. The moment I saw her I knew I had to have her," Elliot explained, still looking deep into my eyes. "I knew right then and there that she was the one I was going to marry."

My heart swelled at his words; I wasn't sure if he was telling the truth or not. But from his words, I feel the power within them. I felt my heart nearly beating out of my chest as I gazed up at him. "You truly are an

incredible couple," Merida breathed just as the audience chorused their "Awes"

"I remember the first thing she wore too," Elliot said, looking back at Merida. "She wore this loose-fitted black V-neck blouse and tight-fitting jeans. If I didn't snag her someone else certainly would have and I wasn't going to let another man touch her."