

# The Viking's Mate Hunt

## Chapter 41 A wicked woman?

Toke's POV.

I knew it was a mistake, I knew the moment I saw her smile. I beamed at her first, feeling like we had finally met at a good moment. That I could make her so happy that she matched my smile. My smile slowly faltered as I watched how her stunning smile twisted. Smug, almost wicked! I knew she was different, knew she was her own, but for some reason, I never even thought of her as a cunning or wicked person. Now I doubted it all. Could she really be?

The whole day I've been running her errands. I mean, paper and pen? She would have to do with a thin, light leather piece and a charcoal piece like the rest of us. Then benches? Inside the little house. I knew she was up to something; I knew I should demand to know before this all went further, but to be honest, I was curious. It also amazed me a little how many of the women that were helping her. They seemed so cheerful, existed. Even the new girls were her, and that one that had been hiding away since she got her. She was having trouble fitting in here, finding her place. I already knew that her mate had raised his concerns and even my mother. But here she was, smiling and chatting with Eir. There was real happiness filling the air around them, and I could not make myself ruin it. Not before I had to, at least. Swallowed hard, goddess, please, don't make it, so I have to!

Eir had gotten permission to use the building, and she had been right in her assumptions. It was only used to house the new girls before the hunt event. At first, I didn't see a problem with it, didn't see how it could be used for something that could create problems. They were moving things around in the main room, it resembled the hall. The great hall where the alpha and lunas thrones were. A place for drinking, meetings, feasts, and celebrations. Why did they need that here? Maybe, just for the women? I didn't really see the need, but again, it wasn't a problem. However, I noticed how they began cleaning out the bedrooms. Making the beds, putting small personal touches on the. It almost gave me the feeling of them moving in. That, that would be a problem. I would have all the males breathing down my neck, demanding that their mates come back. But then again, why would they? There has to be something else. I hope there is something else.

Using the back of my hand to wipe the sweat off my forehead, I squinted towards the blasting sun before I bent down and continued carrying the logs. Around me, there were several other males dragging massive logs after them. Balancing up the paths with their arms filled with firewood. We had all been demoted to workers! To my surprise, I caught my mom pacing pasts us with her arms filled with something too. A bag was tossed over her shoulder, also so stuffed that it looked like it would burst at any minute. It wasn't materials like we were struggling with, fabrics, leathers, and furs, maybe? It looked soft as she hasted past,

"Luna, ehm.. I mean, Mom! What do you have there?"

The suspicion was evident, and I didn't even see a need to try to hide it; she didn't even stop. Slowed down a little as she smiled at me over her shoulder,

"Nothing you need to worry about, Alpha! Just girl's stuff!"

Girls stuff? And what does that mean? If Eir had managed to get my mom to help with her project, she would know what Eir's plan was! She would never help or agree to anything without knowing all details. The how, why, when, and where. I guess I should have relaxed a little by that thought. That my mother, the old Luna, would never agree to something that would create trouble in the pack. But it didn't. There was something about her smile and her dismissive answer that irked me; she was hiding something too. It could just be a surprise! A feast or celebration from the females, I tried to convince myself. But I didn't even manage to believe it for a second.

Most of the day had passed, and we were all having a break. Well, most of us. We were scattered around on the hard ground—sweaty and tired. Eir came over with water and some dried meat for us, and the new girl helped. They filled our cups and handed out the snack. Smiling and actually boasting to us. How much we had done, how strong and effective we were! The mood in the male group shifted quickly, and it was like I could see their energy level rise. Gulping down my water, I watched them. My chest filled with pride. Small gestures, a light squeeze on their shoulder. A smile directly at them as they handed out the water. "So many logs! This is much more than I thought was possible for the whole day! Wow! You are so strong! Did you manage that one on your own? I can't believe you have filled up the firewood shed already!"

Our egos were bursting. Like a peacock flashing their colorful feathers.

Eir smiled at me and filled up my cup with more water,

“Thank you for helping! “

“Of course! You are the future, Luna, after all!”

I beamed back but stopped. She was sweaty, smiling, and looked really happy too. It almost made her skin and eyes shine, but there it was again. That little twitch, the little crooked smile. And realization dawned on me as I looked around. Taking in the males now chatting, smiling, and joking with each other.

“ You.. You did this on purpose?”

“Of course! Everyone needs some positive reassurance every now and then! And now, look at them! They feel better, forget to worry, and forget to ask too many questions. And they will continue to work just as hard after the break. Like kids basking in their parent’s pride!”

Staring at her, I didn’t realize my mouth was hanging up before she shut it with a finger under my chin.

“Relax, no harm done. This works, and nobody gets hurt.”

Chewing my meat, I watched her back as she disappeared around the corner of the house, and with a deep sigh, I had to adjust to the fact that she was indeed as cunning as I feared! This would be a force to be recon with in the future!

She was right to do, and nobody was hurt. It was all positive. But to plan this? What other tricks did she have up her sleeve? How did she manage to gather them all into a project only half knew what was? Involving my mother? The woman that used to grimace every time she saw her at the beginning. This is getting me even more worried about this all! I jumped up and ran after her,

“Eir! Wait! You need to tell me what you are doing here!”

“No. I don’t.”

A little taken aback, I stared at her, no? I’m not used to that answer; it dawned on me now.

“But I’m the alpha! I need to..”

“No. I said you don’t! Don’t you see how excited they all are? How positively it is affecting, especially the women here? Are they not an equal part of your

pack or cult, whatever you call it? We will show you when we are done. Just relax!”

I was everything but relaxed. Her answer did not calm me at all! But it also made me feel a little bad. She was right, and it didn't look like an evil scam was about to unfold. It was a happy and delighted setting, and all I worried about was the male's reactions.