



A promised mate

Tew's POV

Of course, my lose-mouthed brother had spilled the beans. However, she didn't seem to know too much or any details. Not that it mattered, but I wanted to be the one who told her. First, I was irritated when she so obviously avoided telling me about her mother; I thought she was one of those spoiled little brats still stuck in her teenage mentality.

Her files didn't tell me everything, but more than enough to understand she might have a strained relationship with her parental figure.

I had been so eager to hear about her because I didn't remember much. But the woman I remembered was nothing like the woman who raised her. In my memories, she was kind and smiling. She loved to bake; the smell of bread with honey could still make my mouth fill with water. I remember the morning all the Kids gathered around the fire she had started and watched as she made her incredible food on flat stones. Indeed, our ancestors cooked their meat like this, if not hanging over the open flames, but never had anyone managed to make that dusty white powder she made into bread and sweets.

Looking at Eir now, I'm both relieved to see she's okay and glad to see I made the right choice bringing Maya. But I could not help the little pinch of disappointment. I had expected her to be over the moon with joy. In my dreams, she would embrace her new family with hesitating steps and tears. All I got was suspicion and a slight bitterness. So, I get that I might have expected way more than I knew reality could offer, but I didn't think she would be this skeptical. Questioning everything, going back and forth, picking at details, but then I had also failed to consider the fact that her beast was still confined inside of her.



Here, all beasts were released naturally on the human body's 16th birthday, and by the time they turned 18, they could sense their mates. Even if our two planets were similar in many ways, the human earth did not have the strength of the moon goddess. The cold light of their moon would not call for the beats within and help pull them out, so she stayed dormant—until now, that is.

Hades had a unique skill set; he could call for the spirits in a body and pull forward the souls residing inside one's flesh. Being half wolf and half death, god had its perks. He could, however, not claim souls as his mother did, but he could pull them out of their shells. Most of them were grateful when he did, seeking freedom. Suppose I'm not counting spirits or souls that forcefully took a place that did not belong to them, hauntings. They could be a handful.

But he didn't mention anything about her being possessed or haunted, and she didn't look like she was. Then why had her beast acted that way? Didn't she long for her freedom and true form? It didn't make sense. Could Toke have been on to something? If she's an alpha maiden, her best might demand a solid alpha to accompany her.

She agreed to try the séance but wasn't convinced there was anything to get out of it. She and Maya stuck close together while we loaded the smaller boats and headed for the nearest island. Her eyes were filled with curiosity as she watched us prepare the fire. This was a unique tradition, and the fire could only consist of one particular type of wood. It gave me hope to see her curiosity, but I still didn't understand why her face changed every time she saw me.

It was like she locked herself when our eyes met, and the warm smiling face she so gladly shared with the rest faltered. Frankly, it began to piss me off!

Her cold and emotionless attitude towards me irked me and soured my mood. My temper lurked beneath the surface as my disappointment over the whole situation still bothered me. I'm the alpha, for crying out loud! Nobody disrespects me like this, not even her! I grumbled by myself throughout the whole day.

I didn't even care that everyone else seemed to distance themselves from me while we were working. Slowly, the sun began to descend into the ocean's horizon, and the shadows began to stretch around us. Tension grew in our group as the dark slowly spread and took the day over. The ritual was not a dangerous one, but calling for spirits was always tricky. Many things could go wrong. With a deep breath, I reminded myself to have confidence in our ancestors and old gods. I am sure she is supposed to be here, that they want her to be here for a reason so that they will provide.

I didn't think it through when I saw her stand up and walk away from Maya. This was my chance, the first time; they didn't move like they were joined by the hips. Maya stayed behind, clearly making one of my men second guess his choices when he approached her. Eir walked right into the edge of the forest.

"What is your problem?"

Eir almost fell face first when she stepped over a bit of bush on her way out again, obviously not seeing me leaning up against the tree right next to her. I had to fight the urge to roll my eyes and huff. She needs training, which is terrible; no wolf would survive without learning to use all its senses.

"What th... Are you following me?"

Her stiff demeanor was back, glaring at me with evident suspicion.

"I asked you a question! What is your problem? Why am I the lucky one to receive your cold and careless treatment? Didn't you just cross the freaking sea to save you? I involved the godforsaken council in getting to you, and I even held the Viking pack in lockdown when I realized you were gone! I saved your friend and brought her with me for your sake!"

I growled. I didn't mean to be that mad, but it bugged me. All of this rubbed me the wrong way if she really was a spoiled brat from the human world. Used to treat people like this, it would be best to know now before the ritual. Having a loose card like that and giving her a wolf might be a bad idea. I won't jeopardize my wolf's strength for that, so I need to air this now.

"But you gracefully avoided answering the mate part of the claim. I was there when the council read your claim to us! That I was a mate to an alpha."

"Well, because it was of no importance. "

"For you or me?"

She did not waver, crossed her arms over her chest, and met my stare without hesitation. The defiance bottled up in that little body was hard to overlook; she didn't even seem to try. The alpha wolf in me wrinkled its nose, not impressed by the treatment, but strange enough, he was much calmer than I expected him to be.

"I am the alpha and decided that information was unimportant. For both of us!"

With a smug attitude, I sent my alpha aura toward her, but to my

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confusion, she didn't even seem to notice. She reacted with anger instead, and for a brief second, I was just baffled. So taken back, I took an involuntary step back when she started ranting, pushing all her anger and frustration in my direction.

"Oh really? Are you the alpha? Oh, excuse me for not bowing for you. All might mutt! Alpha here and alpha there; I am so sick of that word! It doesn't mean a thing, and most importantly, that little title of yours does not give you the right to decide anything on my behalf! I am not ungrateful or blind to what you have done for me. But I am so sick of you all; I'm so sick of being invisible and not considered able to make my own choices!"

She paused a little, and I kind of felt bad even if my ego was hurt and my alpha genes wanted me to bare my teeth and make her submit. She was, after all, beneath me. Her wolf would not outrank me in any way! Even if female shifters were so rare, it was almost a myth at this point. It didn't automatically make her wolf stronger. But I did understand her, too. I felt her desperation and smoldering frustration, but when she spoke again, the realization hit me, and I understood it even more,

"Are you that alpha? The one I'm supposed to belong to, like a piece of meat?"

Guilt hit me with her question, and I finally realized that all that anger was soaked in fear and sorrow.