OH FOR MATES SAKE

Chapter 85 Bound Life

I didn't know who this woman was, but it was obvious she was someone held at great importance. A man stayed close to her side and was analyzing the child with her. The two of them seemed to be communicating together seamlessly. It wasn't like mindlinking, but they seemed to just know the other's thoughts. The man I saw earlier... Tristan, I think they called him, came to stand slightly in front of the blonde woman. He had an accusing gaze as he stared at Sion and me. It was clear he didn't trust us.

The woman's green eyes were full of compassion and her voice was soft as she spoke. "I am Lilly. I am the Queen of the Fairy Kingdom but am no longer the ruling Queen. This is my husband and mate, Tyler." I watched as her eyes moved up to the tall, brooding man. "And this untrusting man is my guardian and dear family, Tristan." The woman looked at me and I

could feel sincere warmth coming from her.

"Meryl has made a mistake. Honestly... it is the best thing that her memories were left intact now instead of returning to her later. As an infant, these memories will not stay as strong and vivid. We will love her and care for her. We will create new memories for her filled with love and acceptance. These will be the memories that will be the most fresh. She will be given a real chance at happiness. She deserves to know real love and not conditional." I watched as her face grew serious as she glanced up at Rhea, who was still holding the baby. "Unfortunately, there are those whose memories will return and we can only hope that with his new life, he can overcome his haunting past." I wasn't sure who they were talking about, but both women nodded and then looked back at the baby, Beryl.

Lilly reached out and brushed the baby's cheek with

her finger. "Let love heal your heart, little one. You are safe here." I hoped they were right. Meryl was still out there, and she would be waiting to sink her claws in Beryl when she is older.

"She is our daughter now. This is her new life with a clean slate." Rhea said and, as if confirming her words, her mate reached out and embraced the child, cradling her with a loving tenderness. My gaze lingered on the deity, his features softened with such profound love that it was clear any malice of the past had been forgotten. He had taken the child into his embrace as his own, reflecting an unconditional bond between father and daughter.

I can't explain how much it touched me to see them love a baby like that who had once caused them pain. Honestly, it was emotional for me. I was an orphaned baby and was never given parental love. At the time, I had thought this was normal. I understand it more

now. I know that Alpha Scott had allowed my mistreatment, but still those pack members did not have to treat an innocent child like she was a monster. So, this was how it was supposed to be. Because of my past, I was able to see this moment from another perspective. I could empathize with an innocent baby and understand she needed a fresh chance. One that wasn't judged from the past.

I listened as Sion sighed and I lifted my eyes up to his. "I'm glad she's found a home where she'll be loved and accepted," he said softly, but I could see something else in his eyes.

"What is it?" I asked, and everyone's gaze shifted to my mate. I watched as his hazel eyes met with the blue eyes of the deity, Leviathan.

"Her life force has a black cloud in it..." Sion said. He then looked down at me with a solemn look. "Meryl

already anticipated possible betrayal. She has implanted something in the child. I can't see what, but I know it disrupts the lifeline. I am guessing if she doesn't do as she is told, she will use it to obliterate her." My lips parted with a gasp as I shook my head.

"Can't you do something?" I asked, and he shook his head sadly.

"I can't do anything. She is a living soul right now."

"Is it a curse? I can cure curses." Rhea said, and I watched as Sion shook his head.

"Not a curse, Rhea." Lilly finally spoke with determined eyes. "When she gave the child a new life, she bound it with something... like a blood crystal. If the crystal is shattered, so is her life. It is similar to how you and Levi are bound. Your lives are connected."

"So how do we undo it?" I could hear the desperation in Rhea's voice and I felt her pain in my chest. Everyone was looking at the child quietly, until a soft cooing sound broke the silence. I watched Beryl stare up at Leviathan with wide, curious eyes. A smile spread across his face as he spoke to her, his voice gentle and reassuring.

It wasn't fair. Beryl either does Meryl's evil plans or she will be killed. Her choice is evil or death. "Surely, there is a deity who can fix this." I said angrily.

"There are, yes, but most of the deities have taken a step back. Those who still interfere do so through manipulation. Directly interfering can cause the black hole to move again." Lilly said, as I furrowed my brows.

"The black hole?"

"It is an existence that moves on its own. It once threatened to swallow this world up but was stopped by Endymion. He was stuck in the black hole until Rhea and my son Wyatt went in and saved him. If the world is thrown out of balance by interference, it will awaken again." Lilly and her mate Tyler looked at each other as if they were in deep thought.

"Who is Endymion exactly?" I asked, hoping to hear more about the deity who tricked me.

"The lord of the earth is what he is called, but he is not a man. He is the deity of the fairies. He is responsible for both light and dark fairies. Some say that fairy magic is actually his essence. The will is actually his, but I can't say that for sure." Lilly said, and I snorted.

"He is sneaky. He manipulated me into giving up my

first-born daughter to the Diamond pack." I watched as Lilly nodded her head. As if she already knew this.

"Yes, your child will unite with my kin. And it will be their line that the fate of the world will rest. The Moon Goddess uses tricks as well in order to manipulate the future. It seems the two of them do things similarly." Lilly smiled as she looked at me. "Don't worry. Your child will choose their fate. And the Diamond pack is very dear to my heart... from the moment I met my Alpha mate."

"We have to kill Meryl. In order to protect Beryl from her fate." Tristan finally spoke with tension lines on his forehead. "It will be a tough battle, but one the guardians can handle."

"Should we task Alexis and Micah to handle it?" Rhea asked, and Sion cleared his throat.

"I can also end her if she shows herself. The nycrops is an existence of death. She isn't dead, nor is she alive." Sion was staring at Leviathan as if he was waiting for an answer from him.

"The problem is, she will not show herself. She will go into hiding now and wait. Sending Alexis and Micah on a wild goose chase isn't the answer. Especially with Aken..." I watched as Leviathan sighed and shook his head. "He doesn't exactly handle things with class."

"Lee!" Rhea hissed. "Don't talk about our son-in-law like that." Leviathan let out a low groan, as if the words son-in-law curdled his stomach. I couldn't help but feel a bit of amusement at the tension between this man Aken and Leviathan. It was clear there was some interesting history there.

"He is just stating facts." I heard the Dragon King,

Titus, say from behind me. "But maybe we should release... the Kraken..." he snickered and then cleared his throat, "we can't let Meryl win. We need to come up with a plan, something that will keep Beryl safe, like Meryl's death."

"What if..." I looked up at Sion and then back to the baby. "Meryl won't know that we know about the crystal. What if we bind her life to something else? Can we do that?"

"Maybe... maybe I can try to—" Rhea was interrupted by the gentle chuckle of her mate. I watched as he shifted Beryl in one hand while the other curled around her.

"My fairy, you aren't trying anything." He pressed his lips against her head. "Your safety comes first, and I know how reckless you can be."

"But Lee—"

"It is not going to happen, Rhea. Messing with life energy is dangerous and you are not going to risk it... not again... not ever." His words were final and there was no room for negotiation. Despite his stern voice, I could see the warmth and affection for Rhea in his eyes. It was clear how smitten he was with her. I watched as Rhea's brows folded, clearly unhappy with her mate's decision. Her mate stepped forward and attempted to appease her, his voice softening into a soothing melody. "Don't be upset with me Rhea..." I watched as Rhea lifted her gaze up to meet with his.

Her eyes softened, and she leaned into his embrace, letting out a small sigh. "I just want to protect her," she whispered, her voice barely audible.

"I know, my love," Leviathan replied, his voice full of understanding. "But we will find a way to keep her

safe. We have all of us here to protect her." He gestured to the room full of their strong allies, all of whom were staring at the baby with varying degrees of concern.

"We will talk to Kali and see what she suggests. She will know more about this stuff and what our options are." The way their eyes looked at one another was on a different level. I can't explain it, but you could be blind and feel their connection. It was powerful.

"I will also speak with Olga. She knows about this type of magic well. It is how she saved Cody's life." Lilly's voice drew my gaze away from the beautiful couple. "We will take over this situation from here. You have come here for your friend, and we have kept you waiting."

"Is Kai alright?!" Demetri asked and a dark-haired woman from behind them snorted.

"He will live, but he isn't happy."

"He is awake?!" I asked and watched the raven-haired woman nod her head.

"Lilly removed what was left from the demons. He will still need some time to recover, but he will be fine."

"Kelsie... perhaps you should explain to them before we go see Kai." Rhea suggested. I glanced up at Sion as I felt him pull me closer to his side.

"Kelpies have a unique ability. They can claim a life that is on the verge of death. This is how Epona saved Kai. The thing is... Kai is now bonded to Epona, and she does not wish to move to the Chance pack. However, she did agree that they would eventually move to the Diamond Pack. She understands how important pack life is for a wolf. I understand that he

was one of your officers..." Kelsie looked at me and I nodded my head. "I'm afraid he won't be returning to your pack. I grew up visiting the Diamond pack, often and I can tell you he will be part of an amazing pack. Epona has family in the pack which is why she has agreed to live there."

I felt a pang of sadness at the news that Kai would no longer be a part of my pack, but at the same time, I was relieved that he was alive. "I'm just glad he's alive. He's a good officer and I'm sure he'll do well in the Diamond Pack." I tried to sound positive, but there was a hint of disappointment in my voice.

Kelsie nodded her head. "I know it's not what you wanted to hear, but he will be in one of the best packs. Epona is feisty, like most kelpies, but she has a good heart. He's lucky to have been claimed by her." She gave me a small smile. I nodded, feeling a mix of emotions but mainly relief that he would live. I

could still visit him and if my daughter ended up in the Diamond Pack, I know he would be there to watch over her.

"We should go see Kai," Sion said, giving me a gentle nudge. "I'm sure he'll be happy to see us. He will need our encouragement. It is never easy to leave your pack." Sion was right. Kai needed our support and strength right now.

"Please take us to Kai."