

Chapter 5

“You think I cheated on Bronx?” My mouth drops open and I pull my hand away from him. “Are you freaking kidding me? Of course Bronx is his father!”

“Kas, please don’t be mad. All we know is that you left through that portal and came back four months later, pregnant.” Ashley steps forward to defend Milo. “I mean, we all know Bronx broke the mate bond, so you know, if you found someone else, it’s not like there’s anything wrong with that. We just need to know.”

“Ashley, absolutely not. I didn’t cheat on Bronx. He was the one who broke the mate bond, not me. I never broke it from my end.” I can’t believe they would think I would do that unless... Oh my Goddess. My hands move over my mouth. It feels like someone sucked all the air out of the room. My mind goes from a dead stop to a hundred miles an hour in an instant. “D-did Bronx find someone new? Ashley? Is Bronx dating someone else already? Don’t lie to me. Are they serious about each other? Will she be the new Luna? Are you telling me I need to leave? I... um, I could go to Kardiá tou Menae and live with my sisters for a little while. Or, uh, I could move to the apartment in Paris. I-I’m still able to go there, right? Just, um, g-give me a few days to coordinate it? I need to figure out how to transport the twins and find, um, find new doctors for them.”

Maya and Andreas begin to fuss when they sense that I’m upset. I lean down and kiss them with a trembling lip. After a few reassuring words, they both settle down. What am I going to do? I know we aren’t mates anymore, but he moved on so fast? I can’t even imagine being with someone else. Maybe he never really loved me at all. Maybe it was always just the mate bond. My chest aches thinking about all the promises we made to each other when there was no one else to hear us. Everything we have been through was all for nothing.

“Little Sister, relax. No one is saying you cheated on Bronx. Quit worrying about him. Regardless of what’s going on between you two... or not... your place is here as our Luna. You don’t need to go anywhere." Milo gives me his best fake angry look until he’s sure I will not talk back. "Don’t make me fight your scrawny ass to keep you here, either. I know you’ve beaten me in a scrimmage before, but I don’t think you’re as strong as you were then. Just sayin’.”

I open my mouth to say something, but he puts his finger on my chin and closes it for me.

“Please hear me out, okay? The DNA shows Maya is... well... a Goddess. We only have your DNA to compare to, though. She’s definitely related to you, but not enough for you to be her mother. Which, I guess, makes her your sister... like she’s supposed to be? She has nothing that matches Bronx’s DNA at all, but I guess she’s not supposed to? I don’t know. We’re not sure how that is supposed to work exactly, but Bronx says he feels pulled to her like he is her father. So that’s weird in its own right.”

“Okay? Bronx told me that Cora said he is always a good father before she died.” I shake my head, confused. “Technically, Endymion is her father. I don’t know how it’s supposed to work, either. The last time I gave birth to her, genetic testing wasn’t a thing. From what I remember, Bronx died a month before she was born in that lifetime. French Wars of Religion... it was... messy...” I think back to what I can remember from that lifetime and scrunch my nose. “Was James able to find anything on Cora’s Menae blade server?”

“Cora... er... Maya’s records are the least detailed out of the fifty of you. Even more so than the rest of the Wild. She and Dante really make it a point to stay out of sight if they can help it.” He clears his throat and adjusts his position.

“Okay, but that is Maya. I feel like you’re trying to distract me. What does this have to do with Andreas?” I try to keep my voice level, but it breaks with the question. “What’s wrong with him?”

“Kas, based on the DNA, Andreas is Bronx’s son. Like ninety-nine point six percent.” Milo bobs his head with each word.

“Okay then, why the heck would you ask me if I cheated on Bronx?” I drop my shoulders, feeling frustrated.

“No one asked if you cheated on Bronx, Kas. Please don’t twist words. No one is against you here. We’re just trying to figure out what’s going on because this is the part where we get into the point four percent. Again, NOT accusing you of anything.” Milo stops and stares at me.

“Okay. Not accusing me of anything. Fine. Just tell me what’s going on with my son!”

“The results show he doesn’t have any Alpha markers.” He presses his lips together to gauge my reaction. “That’s where we’re trying to figure shit out.”

I look down at Andreas and his fragile features. This is my fault. I went to Mount Olympus and forced Zeus’s hand in front of the rest of the Olympian Gods and Goddesses. I embarrassed him and stole his energy in front of his court. I could have killed him, but I didn’t. Yeah, it was a power move on my part, but I really needed the energy to create Kardiá tou Menae. Regardless, I forced him to keep his word and give me a baby. This is his payback. I don’t care what Andreas is. I’ll love him no matter what. Others in our community won’t be so understanding if they find out that he isn’t an Alpha wolf.

I close my eyes and curse under my breath. To Hell with Zeus.

“Does Bronx know?” I look at my friends from the side of my eye.

“Yeah.” Reggie puts his hands on his hips and cocks his knee out. “He doesn’t care, Kas. He wants to see his pups. We’ve been keeping him out of here, but at some point, we have to trust him with his own children.”

“O-okay. Yeah, we shouldn’t keep them from him.” I nod, feeling the fear building in my chest again. I look at Andreas and Maya. “I, uh, I need to see him too? I don’t know if I’m ready.”

“He’s promised us he won’t hurt any of you, and I believe him. Bronx is a lot of things, but he’s not a liar.” Ashley sighs and steps to the bedside. She brushes what’s left of my thin hair back with her fingers and takes my chin in her hand. Her face is full of care and concern. Tears well up in her eyes before she begins again. “I’ve missed you so much, girlie. I was so scared we would never see you again. I wanted so badly to come see you in the dungeon, sneak some food to you, but we were all ordered not to even say your name. When you... died... the order broke and then you came back to us.”

I take her hand and hold it against my cheek. She is warm and her energy is full of love. I have missed this firecracker of a woman.

I shake my head and finally feel tears well up in my eyes. The only time I let myself cry in the past five months was the day I came back from the magical apartment used as the headquarters for the Mavri Magea after I completed Kardiá tou Menae and escorted all my sisters there. Until then, I pushed all emotions down to focus. It was the only way I could build a home for my sisters using magic I had collected over centuries. That and the energy I had siphoned from unsuspecting victims. Oh, and I had to work with dark creatures and cast some really nasty curses to make it happen. I’m not innocent.

In the end, all the dark and evil things I did in the shadows allowed me to create a place where the Menae could live in peace. Without the interference of the outside world and their five leaders, myself included. A place of love and hope and rehabilitation for any of the Menae who needs or wants it. I literally went to the underworld and back, working with some of the darkest, dangerous beings to create a place of light and safety. As the God Hades once said to me, “The darker the dark, the lighter the light.”

“Don’t cry, Kas.” Reggie stands behind Ashley. “We’re going to get this all figured out. We won’t let you down. Not again.”