

Chapter 46

Violet

The next week went by with a slick tension in the air. I talked to Dad about Marian, and he'd agreed to get to Blood Moon as soon as possible. Within three hours, she was in the back of an SUV with a couple of his guys, thanking me tearfully, and profusely. I felt better seeing her leave the place that held memories of terror and horror for her. It was a kind of relief to know she would be safe from here on out. An even bigger relief to know the man responsible for her suffering was rotting.

Greg and I had drawn up several informed and detailed plans for the fields, and even a location for the future factory. We'd been informed that one field, at the South end of the pack, was now unusable due to heavy rain and flooding for so long. The area was big enough, and with some work, it would make the perfect spot. And it was easily accessible to the pack. We agreed to come back to the flooding issue when plans for construction were being made. Greg was gathering his old friends, their sons and daughters, and anyone else who wanted to work in the fields. Dad had special ordered all the machinery they would need; At this rate, they'd be back to work in a couple days.

The issue we were facing now was our ruling on the packhouse. After talking to the girls who worked here, and the pack members who used to work here, there wasn't a lot of positivity towards the place. The only one who seemed happy to be here still was Stacy, and I was starting to question her sanity. According to everyone else, the house was generally, and always had been, an unpleasant environment. Girls would be verbally and sometimes physically assaulted by Anne, while being harassed by Warrick when she wasn't around. A few of the girls had had affairs with his 'friends', who were all mated men. Interestingly enough, Kettler wasn't

one of them. Or at least, none of the girls had admitted to it. Either way, it made my outlook on him slightly brighter.

In fact, I was off to see him this morning for a follow up appointment about the twins. As much as I wished it was my mom, I wasn't going to ask her to come all the way out here for one appointment.

"I'll come to the next one, I promise." Jasper was still apologizing.

"Jasper, I told you, it's fine. I know some women get worked up about this, but I'm not. As long as you're in the delivery room, that's all I care about."

"I know, you said. But I want to come. There's just so much I have to do today." He groaned.

"I know. And Dad is leaving today. You still have to officially sign the alliance contract, and then get down to the Masons place, and then over the Listowel's, and didn't you have another family?"

"The Piers. And after that, I have to go check on all the materials your dad ordered for the rebuilds, sign off on them..."

I put my hand on his cheek. "It's a big job. I'm a little overwhelmed myself. But we'll fall into step soon. Like Dad and Uncle Ben said, usually an Alpha doesn't have this much chaos when he takes over. It's a unique situation."

"I keep telling myself that. We're making progress, little by little. I can't wait to see the end result. The new, and better Silver Moon."

"Me too. I have to go. I love you."

"I love you too. I want ultrasound pictures."

"I'll be sure to remind them."

We shared a kiss, and then I was out the door. As of right now, we were still in that horrid room downstairs, and I was always glad when I left it.

I swung by the kitchen, grabbing a cream cheese bagel before I made my way out. King had instructed me earlier on the directions to the pack hospital, it wasn't far. However, it would be my first time seeing it in person. It was the opposite direction from the Hall, perhaps I'd seen it when we'd first arrived and didn't notice. My mind wasn't focused on that though; I had a different agenda today, aside from the welfare of my babies.

"Two-twenty-three.... two-twenty-five..." I counted the address numbers as I walked until I was standing in front the hospital. I blinked, confused. This couldn't be it.

The building in front of me looked like any run-down house on the street. Old red-brick, with vines growing carelessly and lazily up the sides and front. The lawn was slightly overgrown, and one window had a hole in the bottom corner, reminding me of the time I'd accidentally thrown a baseball through the window of our packhouse. The roof was in bad shape, desperately in need of repair, and the stone porch and steps were absurdly cracked and chipped. It was a wonder nobody had an injury just trying to walk up to the door.

Mindful of this, I tread carefully, knocking on a worn brown door that had the paint peeling away. Everything about the place was falling apart!

"Oh."

Looking up, I was face to face with Kettler. Today, his hair was tied back into a ponytail, and he wore the standard white coat of a doctor. He also didn't look particularly happy to see me.

"I'm here for my appointment..." I said.

"Come on." He replied gruffly.

I stepped inside awkwardly, looking around. The inside wasn't much better than the outside; Faded yellow walls, a narrow hallway with a dirty

rug, and some plants that gave a weak impression that someone was trying to keep the place up. I frowned.

"In here." Kettler stood beside an open door. I nodded as I passed him. The room seemed generally clean enough, but nowhere near where it should be. I took off my jacket, hanging on the back of the patient chair.

"I'll need to open a new file for you." He sat down at a desk, starting to click around on the computer there. "You can take a seat."

"Alright."

"I'll need your full name, birthday, rank. And I would appreciate a phone number to your old hospital so they can send me your medical history."

I gave him all the generic details about myself, noting that Ashwell had been correct in his assessment of Kettler attitude. The whole time he typed away on the keyboard, he never looked at me. Anytime he asked me something, it was quick, to the point, but not friendly.

"Anything I should know about your past? Any substantial injuries?"

"Uhm... I fell out of a tree when I was four?"

His lip twitched slightly. "How bad was the fall?"

"I broke my arm." I shrugged.

He entered the information, sliding his chair back. "We can begin now."

I tried very hard not to roll my eyes as I stood and walked around him to the bed. I laid down, placing my hands at my sides. Kettler stared at me, visibly hesitating.

"Is there a problem?" I asked.

"No." He snapped. I watched him walk to a small sink that was, like everything else here, rather unhygienic looking. Even after he'd put the gloves on, I wasn't sure how clean his hands really were. Wheeling the

machine, he needed out from the head of the bed, he finally looked me in the face. "Any idea how far along you are?"

"My Mom said a few weeks before we came here."

"Your Mom?"

"She's the head Doc at Blood Moon."

"Figures." He muttered. Louder he said, "So you don't know the genders yet?"

I shook my head.

"Alright. Can you lift your shirt, and place this towel down?" He hadn't me what was essentially a rag. With holes. I raised my eyebrows at him and he scoffed. "I know it's not as fancy as you're used to-"

"I'll pass on the towel." I interrupted him.

"Fine."

I lifted my shirt to reveal my abdomen and he applied the gel. It was ice-cold, making me jump a little. However, when he put the ultrasound wand on my stomach, I focused on my gut feeling, my instincts. Mom and Dad always told us to trust our instincts, especially when it came to people. And to trust our wolves.

"What do you think?" I asked Hala.

"I don't like him."

"Really?"

"His attitude sucks, and he's an asshole." She huffed. "But I don't feel the need to rip his head off. Yet, anyways."

"I get it. I'm not uncomfortable, not really."

"As long as his focus is on our pups."

"Ahem!"

Turning my head, Kettler was frowning deeply at me.

"What?"

"I asked you a question."

"Oh. I was talking to my wolf, sorry."

"Was it important?"

I shrugged. "She called you an asshole."

He paused. "Is that so?"

"Yup. What did you ask me?"

His lips pressed into a line. "I asked if you wanted to know the genders today."

"You can tell that?"

"Obviously, or I wouldn't be asking."

"Yes, please. But first I want to know how they look. Are they healthy?"

He looked back at the screen. "Appears so. Baby B is very active."

"Can... Can I see?"

He turned the monitor without answering. My mouth fell slack. They were so different! Last time I saw them, they were little dots, barely resembling anything. Now, I could make out limbs, heads, even a tiny little foot! Kettler pointed to the screen in two spots.

"These are the heartbeats. Both look good, normal."

The twin on the right started moving, appearing to be jumping around. I laughed, watching my baby play in the womb. How amazing they were already!

"The genders?"

He adjusted the wand on my skin. "Baby A... is a boy." He stated.

My heart flipped. I was having a boy.

"And Baby B..." He moved the wand to other side of my stomach. Adjusted it. And then again. "Stop moving little one..."

I was amazed to hear Kettler's voice so soft, almost kind when he said that. After a few minutes, he sighed.

"Try turning on your side. Sometimes that settles them down enough."

I did as he instructed.

"Ah. Baby B... is also a boy."

I gasped. Identical boys!

"Oh Goddess."

"Not what you wanted?"

I shook my head. "I don't care what they are, as long as they're healthy. Just.... boys. Wow. Mom said boys were easier than girls though."

"I wouldn't know, I only have girls."

"Can you print off a couple pictures for me? For Jasper?"

"Sure."

This time I took the towel to clean off the gel while he went through the stills he'd taken and printed some out. He handed them to me, leaning back while I looked them over, smiling widely.

"These are adorable. Thank you."

"We'll need to schedule another appointment, in two weeks."

"Okay."

He stood, but I called out to him. "Kettler, wait."

He half turned back. "I prefer Dr. Kettler in the hospital."

"Right, sure. I think we should talk."

"About?"

"The hospital." I said, as if it should be obvious.

He let out a breath. "I thought about what you said, about new equipment. It's a generous offer, but honestly, I'll have to decline. We don't have the room."

He sounded so defeated, so angry. Given the state of the place, I could understand why.

"That offer still stands." I said.

"Didn't you hear? We don't have the room."

"Well, not here, no."

He swung around, fully facing me. "What does that mean? You expect me store it somewhere else?"

"Yeah. Like at a new hospital." I crossed my arms.

He blinked slowly. Opened his mouth. Closed it. Finally, he shook his head, running his hand down his face.

"What am I supposed to say to that?"

"You're supposed to say yes."

"What are you even talking about? Are you saying...what? You want to move the hospital?"

"More like I want to build a new one."

He laughed. Hard, enough that he doubled over.

"You and that mate of yours..." He gasped. "Absolutely crazy!" Kettler straightened, a new glint in his eyes. Like someone who wanted to hope, but was too afraid to.

"What is so crazy about it? This place is obviously in no shape anymore for a medical practice. How rusted is that sink?" I jerked my chin towards it.

"Almost to the point of falling apart at the touch." He smirked. "The roof has holes that open into two of the rooms, so they are unusable. The Head Doctor barely comes in because the state of things here is so poor. The floors are garbage, the walls probably have mold behind them, and yesterday, I chased a rat out with a broom."

"If that's the case, then why are you so against the idea of a new building?" I asked curiously.

"Do you know how many times I talked to Warrick?" He sneered. "How many times I told him about the roof before it finally gave way? That we needed updated equipment, a new paint job, new computers? I begged him to do something. At one point I begged him to relocate us to a more suitable place." He took a step in my direction. "Nothing ever happened. I stayed loyal to that mutt for years on the promise that something would get done! And then he dies, and you walk in, wanting, not to relocate, but you build a new hospital."

"I don't see what's so unbelievable about that. My Dad-"

"That's right. Your Dad is going to pay for it." He sank into his chair, glaring at me. "And what's the plan for that huh? You know it has to be paid back. You know a cost like that will carry over well into your children's lives. Maybe even your grandchildren. You and your mate want to rebuild Silver Moon on someone else's dime. You think you're helping us, but you're only putting us into debt with a pack that could wipe us off the planet in an instant if we fail to repay!"

Pursing my lips, I thought his words over. It was understandable he would worry about that, and I wondered how many others thought the same. But they didn't know Blood Moon, didn't know my family. How could they know they didn't have anything to worry about if they'd never met them?

Moreso, how could I address that issue with pack members, and reassure them? I supposed I'd have to try with Kettler first.

"My family wouldn't do that to you." I said.

"Yes, I'm sure the Heartless Alpha is just pining to help out a poor pack without any hidden agenda!"

"He isn't like that anymore." I argued calmly. "Not for a long time. Not since he accepted my mom. He would never put so much into helping someone only to take it away like that. If a problem occurred, his first thought would be to find a solution, not to wipe out Silver Moon." I walked back to my seat, plopping down.

"I can only apologize for the way you were treated before. I can't change the past. But I can help you now, and in the future. This place... this isn't suitable for anyone. My Mom would definitely agree, being the Head Doctor at Blood Moon. And I know for a fact that she would murder my dad if he ever even thought about taking a hospital away from a pack. And believe me, if you should fear anyone, it's her."

"Really?" He mocked.

"Ever heard of a Mother Wolf?" His eyes widened.

"Wait... So that's true? The Luna of Blood Moon really is a Mother Wolf?"

I smirked. "You can ask Anne if you don't believe me. I heard Mom shifted when she wouldn't leave after the challenge."

His eyes were now the size of dinner plates. "Are you...?"

"No. Though I am quite large. Or Hala is, rather."

I swear he exhaled in relief, and I chuckled. Then I leaned forward in my seat.

"We don't have to be enemies Kettler. I don't make empty promises. If you're willing to work with me, I really can help you."

He stared at me for a while. I never budged, showing him, I was totally serious. Eventually, he made a decision.

"Alright." He agreed. "On one condition."

"Name it."

"I want the hospital to be top priority. You don't know... I've had to turn away so many pack members because I don't have the room to put them here. Elderly, and even some children."

I nodded. "I'll talk to Jasper. Later we can address the pack as a whole, but I agree with you."

I stood, grabbing my jacket. I turned back at the door, amused to see Kettler still looking kind of stunned. "I have a condition of my own." I said.

"What?"

"You work with me on this. I can tell you really care about what you do, and I need someone like that, with that dedication, to help me see it through."

Unbelievably, a slow smile spread across his face. "Deal."

I returned his smile, leaving the room.

"Violet?"

I paused with my hand on the doorknob of the front door, looking over my shoulder.

"Yes?"

".... Thank you."

"That's what a Luna is for."

