

Chapter 48

Jasper

It had been exactly one month now since the construction on the hospital started. After Dimitri made some calls, and Luna Lily as well, I was extremely happy to be standing in front of a brand-new building. It was definitely the most modern of anything in Silver Moon, but not for long. Construction on the homes had started a few days ago, and was going fast paced, but efficient. The pay-off of both projects was huge.

Every day, more and more people would come to help, and so, new bonds were formed. Working side-by-side the people of my pack, I started to make friends. I even looked forward to waking up to a hard day's work, using my bare hands to create something so necessary. Violet put in her share by setting up tents and distributing food and drinks, as well as making sure any and all deliveries were delivered, signed for, and stocked accordingly. Her right-hand man was Kettler, of course, and I was shocked and amazed at how close they'd grown over the course of thirty days.

He was still rough around the edges, and it was safe to say his former friend group had abandoned him. But he was much kinder to those around him, even helping by taking heavy items from the elders, or helping setting up the tents for the day. Mostly, he helped Violet, making sure everything was the way it should be. The Head Doctor had formally put in his request to retire, making Kettler the new Head as well.

Another big, and very welcome, surprise was my parents and sister finally coming to Silver Moon. They'd expressed so much pleasure in what we were doing already, and Dad came every day to help while Mom worked the tents when Vie wasn't around. Elena was perfectly content helping our

mom, never once complaining. Kiren was due to arrive back home too, soon enough.

"Ladies and gentlemen." I took Violet's hand, smiling hugely. "I am so pleased to announce to you that the pack hospital of Silver Moon is officially open!"

A deafening roar went up. People hugged, and many expecting mothers were in tears. Vie rubbed her now swelling belly, her own eyes misty.

"This is amazing." She said.

"I know." I pulled her to me. To the crowd, "The tents are set up over there. Food and drinks have been laid out. This is a great cause for celebration, so please, help yourselves and celebrate."

People started moving towards the designated area. Music was playing from a table inside, the tables making a wide horse shoe. The center was for mingling, as many were already doing, while others took the seats spaced around. Kettler jogged up to us on our way.

"I'm going to do one more full sweep." He said to Violet.

"Oh, Kettler. We've done five already, and we've been cleared through the proper channels to be open and running. Come on, eat something, talk to people."

"Not really mt thing, you know."

"Your mate and children are here." She pointed. "Just go pretend you're enjoying yourself then."

He smirked. "Perhaps, for a little while." He waved before taking off.

"I don't see any of Kettler's former acquaintances here." I noted, looking around.

"I'm not surprised. None of them helped with the build either. It seems some people just don't want to mature."

"It's a bit more than that." I smiled at Greg and his buddies as we passed. "I'm not sure what to do about them. I meant what I said about having each other's backs; They don't look out for anybody but themselves."

Vie pulled me to a stop. "I get it. But maybe, for just right now, you can turn off being Alpha? Just come and enjoy this with me."

My eyes raked over her face, down to her chest and legs. She looked downright stunning. in a long flowy black dress, her stomach round at the middle. She wore minimal make-up for the event, but she didn't need it. She was glowing. Slowly, I ran my hand up her arm, over her shoulder and to her cheek.

"I am very tempted to enjoy you." I said lowly.

She bit her lip. "That's not what I said."

"It's what I'm thinking."

Lust sparked in her eyes. I leant down until our lips touched, taken aback by the force of her kiss. Sparks electrocuted between us, and I almost forgot we were surrounded by people.

"Ahem!"

We pulled apart, finding Dimitri standing next us. He looked awkward. Vie giggled.

"Dimitri." I nodded. "Enjoying the celebration?"

"Yes, thank you. I just came to tell you that we're leaving in a little while."

"Oh?"

"I've stayed longer than I expected, not that I minded helping. But it's time to home. Ben won't shut up about Clara, and I really can't listen to their phone calls anymore."

"Awe, Uncle Ben knows what phone sex is?" Violet asked calmly.

"Goddess Violet! No... Well, maybe. But I haven't been around for that. Just... Ugh, come give me a hug before I go."

I laughed as they embraced. I felt a little sad to see him go, but I was more able mentally now. I felt ready to take on this job without him now, he'd taught me a lot in the short time he'd been here. I held out my hand when Violet stepped back. Dimitri took it firmly, smiling.

"Thank you, Dimitri. For everything. I'll make sure Silver Moon remembers what you did for them."

"I didn't do anything but throw some money away. You and Violet did it all son. You inspired hope in these people, gave them a new start. A few new buildings don't mean much compared to that."

"Come back when the babies are born." I said.

"Wouldn't miss it. We'll keep in touch."

"Bye Dad. Love you."

"Love you too kid."

"Tell Garrett I said hi, okay?"

"Will do."

Ben strode over to us. "C'mon s'more, the cars are packed."

"I told you to stop calling me that!"

"Never."

Dimitri rolled his eyes at his Beta. With one last wave, they sauntered out of the tents together.

"Do you want anything?" I asked my mate.

"Is there any chicken?"

I chuckled. "Of course there is. I made sure it was on the menu."

"Then you know what I want." She grinned.

"Be right back."

I made my way through the party, stopping briefly to talk to some people. When I reached the table with the meats, I started loading up a plate with chicken, mashed potatoes, peas and carrots, cheese and pickles. Violet's appetite had grown considerably, and I knew I'd be filling another plate within the hour, even with this one piled so high.

"My, someone has an appetite."

The smooth feminine voice was at my ear. Head turning right, I found Stacy smiling up at me. Her blonde hair was done in loose waves that fell to her waist, and she was wearing a very low-cut red dress that hugged her skin. She was also standing extremely close to me, one hand on her hip, the other on the table. I took a step away from her.

"Hello Stacy." I greeted her politely.

"Are you enjoying yourself Alpha?"

"Yes, I am. You?"

"I'm enjoying myself very much." She flashed me a wide smile.

"Good."

"I can't believe we have a hospital." She continued. "So much work, am I right?"

I almost snorted at her remark. Work? She hadn't done any work. I'd seen her plenty of times over the past month hanging around the site, but she never lifted so much as a hammer and nails. Mostly her and her friends would sit around, giggling and trying to chat up the men who were working. Twice, I asked if she was able to help out in the tents, and twice, she denied me, saying she was happy where she was. After that, I'd stopped bothering.

"It's a big accomplishment." I agreed with her. I poured some gravy onto the mashed potatoes. "Excuse me, I have to get this to Violet."

She wrinkled her nose a little. "Aren't you sweet, bringing her food?"

"Yeah, I guess."

She sighed dramatically. "I wish I had a mate to take care of me like that."

"You will someday."

"I doubt it." She pouted. "I didn't find him on my eighteenth."

"Well, maybe he's not in this pack. Sorry, but I have to go."

"Bye Alpha."

I walked away, relieved to end the conversation. The girl was weird, and it was obvious she didn't like Violet. Girls were way too jealous sometimes. I found Vie at a table, chatting with some other girls. They nodded respectfully to me as I approached, taking their leave. I set the plate down in front of her, pulling up my own chair.

"Extra gravy, just the way you like." I smiled.

"Thank you." Her eyes cast to the side, narrowing a bit. "Were you talking to Stacy?"

I nodded. "Briefly. She came up to me while I was getting your food."

Vie took a big bite of the chicken. "About?"

I shrugged. "Nothing, really. Whining about not having a mate to take care of her."

The fork froze halfway to her mouth, her eyes immediately finding mine.

"What?"

"It's not a big deal; I didn't even really pay attention."

"You know she was flirting with you, right?"

"I kind of figured that." I reached across the table, taking her hand. "I have no interest in Stacy. Or any other girl for that matter."

"I know that. But it still bugs me that she would try." Her eyes grazed sideways again. I followed her line, finding Stacy, now talking with her usual group. She saw us looking and gave a wave. Violet gave a tight smile in return, looking away. She stabbed her chicken.

"Calm down Vie."

"I'm calm." She snapped.

I scooted my chair closer to her. "You never have to worry about her, or anyone else. I love you, and I always will."

"Good. Because I'm kind of the coolest chick there is." She smirked.

I laughed. "Yes, you are." Leaning over the table, our lips almost touched before a loud, terrorized shriek filled the air. Jerking away from each other, I jumped to my feet, trying to locate the source of the sound.

"Rogues!"

As soon as I heard the word, I gently, but firmly pulled Violet up.

"Go! Get the women, children, and elders to the packhouse!" I said.

She shook her head. "Too far! I'll get them into the hospital."

"Alright, go!"

I walked away quickly, pushing my way through panicked pack members. Growls were erupting now, and the sounds of a fight. I exited the tents, finding an already full force battle going on not thirty feet away. At least a dozen wolves were charging forward, trying to get through the warriors. I snarled, ripping my jacket off and kicking off my shoes. And then I was on all fours, teeth bared as I jumped into the fray. I went for the closest wolf, his scent a dead giveaway of his rogue status, and sunk my teeth into his shoulder. He yelped, jumping around. My claws came up, and then

back down his side, fat and blood pouring out. Leaving him on the ground, I moved onto the next.

"Leave one alive!" I commanded through the mind-link.

I spotted two rogues on top of one of the warriors, biting away. The brown wolf on the ground was clawing, kicking, and biting in an attempt to escape. Sprinting their way, I collided with one, sending him flying. The other let out a surprised whine, jumping back. The brown wolf jumped at him, immediately sinking his teeth into the neck. We worked chaotically until the ground was littered with bodies.

"Got one over here. Knocked him out." Ashwell said. His gray wolf was circling a now naked man lying in the grass.

"Good job. Take him... Where do you usually take them?"

"We have cells. They aren't too reliable."

I growled. "Of course they're not. Just take him there, and post guards. Inside and out. If he makes it outside before I question him, he's dead."

"Yes Alpha."

I shifted back, looking for pants, and grateful when someone handed me a pair of sweats. Then I looked around, wincing. The once green grass was stained with red. Deceased shifted men lay all around. I counted fourteen in total, including our prisoner. What a mess.

"Vie?"

"Jasper! Are you okay?"

"I'm good. It wasn't much of a fight."

"It's over?"

"Yeah."

"Alright. I'll move everyone out, away from here. See you at the house?"

"I'll be there soon."

Cutting off the link, I made my way to the warriors huddled together.

"Anybody injured?" I asked.

"A few scratches. Nothing that won't heal within the hour." One of them answered.

"Alright. Can we clean this up?"

"What should we do with the bodies?"

I paused. "What do you mean?"

They exchanged looks. "How should we uh...dispose of them?"

I frowned. "The same we always do?"

"Burn them?"

I swung around, rounding on them. "What?! No! Where the fuck did you get that from?" I eyed each of them, the lightbulb going off. "Have you never been properly trained in how to deal with rogue corpses?"

They all shook their heads.

"What?! Do you usually burn the bodies?!" I demanded.

"Sometimes, if there isn't a lot..."

"Other times, we just toss them in the woods." Another replied quietly.

Disgust and anger were evident on my face, I could tell. "We don't burn bodies! Or toss them! We bury them for Goddess sakes! Even rogues have the right to be buried like you or I!" I shouted. Some men flinched at my words.

"Yes Alpha. Where?"

"Find a spot away from the housing and away from here. I don't care if it's in the woods. And dig deep, no shallow graves."

"Yes Alpha." They chorused. I stormed away from them, appalled. King hurried up to me.

"I want everybody that was tossed in the woods found, and buried where ever those men are burying these guys." I ordered gruffly.

"Of course."

"You ever seen them before?" I nodded to a rogue on the ground as we passed.

"Never. We don't get random attacks here much. Last time was a couple years ago, I think it's because we're close enough to Blood Moon."

"Well, let's hope the guy Ashwell took down talks. I want to know why they attacked."

He glanced at me. "Their rogues. They attack for food, or money, or just because their dumb."

I stopped in my tracks, facing him. "Did you see the way they moved together? How they were trying to get around us? If they wanted food or money, they could have gone straight for the packhouse, or for town. But they came here instead."

He thought about it. "You're right. It is odd, for rogues."

"Exactly. Go find your mate, and then I want you posted at the cells, outside."

"Can do." He bowed his head before running off.

I quickened my pace as well, anxious to see my own mate.

