

Chapter 53 Charity Gala

Moana

I didn't see Edrick the next day, or the day after that, for that matter. When he was not at work, he mostly stayed in his bedroom or in his study, and only spoke in brief words to me in passing. I couldn't help but wonder if he had some idea that I went out with his brother for dinner, although admittedly, I also didn't hear from Ethan at all either.

As the days ticked on and Selina's deadline came closer, I still hadn't made a decision over whether to keep the baby or not. I appreciated the housekeeper's kind generosity, but I could tell that her patience was starting to wear thin. If I didn't make a decision soon, I was almost certain that she would say something to Edrick; the housekeeper no doubt realized immediately from my insinuations that the baby belonged to Edrick, and she was too loyal to the Morgan family not to say anything to him about it.

I couldn't help but wonder about something else, too: if I decided to keep the baby, would it also be a good idea to finally tell Edrick that I had started showing signs of having my own wolf? Would he be more likely to accept the baby as his own if he knew that it wasn't actually a hybrid? But then again, would that also cause more disappointment for him down the line if the child wound up being wolfless? Mina still hadn't shown any

signs of fully emerging any time soon, so there was no telling as to whether I was always going to be considered a human in everyone's eyes.

Despite all of these questions floating around in my head, however, I still had a job to do. I spent the next few days tending to Ella as much as I could, and continued to take the nausea pills that the doctor prescribed me so that I could perform my job duties. If I did decide to keep this baby, I would have to know for certain that I would have enough job stability to at least be able to save up a bit of money in case Edrick decided to fire me if he found out. I couldn't be going around taking any more personal time off, upsetting Edrick, or shirking my job responsibilities due to nausea.

One day, it was particularly rainy outside. I was sitting on the living room floor with Ella and putting together a puzzle with her when I suddenly heard the elevator doors open, and looked over my shoulder to see Edrick hanging his raincoat and umbrella on the hook by the door.

He saw me looking and frowned briefly, his eyes darting away as though he didn't even want to look at me, before he came to stand in front of Ella and myself.

"What are you doing?" he asked, his question directed at Ella instead of me, which I was getting used to at this point.

"A puzzle," Ella replied thoughtfully as she dug through the pile of pieces to find the next piece of the giraffe that we were working on. "It's an... African... Saforee."

"African Safari," I corrected her.

"Looks interesting," Edrick said. It was strange of him to be socializing with both of us together considering how aloof he had been lately, but I figured that he was ramping up to something — and I realized that my assumptions were correct only a few moments later.

“Moana, I’d like to talk to you,” he said, turning toward his study. I nodded and climbed to my feet, watching as he stormed off without another word. At that moment, I was certain that I was going to be scolded for something, and I could feel my heart quicken its pace. Had Selina mentioned the pregnancy to him after all?

“I’ll be right back,” I said to the thoroughly distracted Ella, ruffling her hair before following Edrick and closing the study door behind me.

“What is it?” I asked.

“I’m holding a charity gala tomorrow night,” Edrick replied. “I expect you to be there.”

I furrowed my brow, taken aback by the Alpha billionaire’s sudden mention of charity. “A charity gala?” I asked. “What for?”

“Contrary to popular belief, I do keep my promises,” he said. “It’s for the orphanage.”

Now, I was even more taken aback. I thought back to my last conversation with Sophia, who told me that Edrick had been updating her on the process, but I never thought that he would go so far as to host a charity gala for the orphanage’s sake.

Once my shock had faded enough for me to speak, I finally said, “That’s... That’s really nice of you. Thank you.”

Edrick shrugged. “It looks good for the company.”

I didn’t believe him. I knew that there was a tiny bit of the Alpha CEO deep down that secretly wanted to help people, but I didn’t say that.

“Anyway,” he continued, “be ready by six o’clock.”

I nodded and excused myself before turning to the door to leave, but just as I placed my hand on the doorknob, Edrick called after me one last time.

“Oh, and by the way,” he said, “my brother won’t be there. So there’s no need for you to show off.”

I froze, my grip tightening on the doorknob. Had Edrick realized that I went on a date with Ethan after all?

“Show off?” I said, turning around to face him and feeling my hand curl up into a fist at my side. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

Edrick scoffed. “I saw how you were dressed the other night. You looked far too beautiful that night for someone who was just going out for a simple dinner with a friend.”

I felt my face get red as Edrick called me beautiful, and judging from the surprised look that flashed across his visage, I could tell that even he was a bit surprised by his own choice of words. “Anyway,” he continued, turning around to face the window as well as to likely hide his own embarrassment, “dress well tonight, of course, but don’t dress too well. And remember: many of the people in attendance are going to be wealthy werewolf socialites, so I expect you to behave accordingly.”

“And... As for Ella?” I asked, choosing to ignore the fact that he had essentially just told me that I couldn’t be trusted to act appropriately in front of wealthy werewolves.

Edrick turned around to face me once more. “She’ll be coming, too,” he said.

I c****d my head. “I thought you have to keep her from the public eye—”

“Yes,” Edrick said, waving me away with his hand, “but the gala will only have trusted friends and family in attendance, as well as only a few trusted reporters. I’m not worried, so long as you keep her occupied.”

I nodded. “Is that all?”

Edrick nodded as well. “Yes. You can go now.”

Without another word, I turned and left the room. I still felt strange around Edrick after our last interaction, when he essentially told me that my social class was too lowly for him to treat me with respect — but, at the very least, he hadn't mentioned the pregnancy. I was relieved to know that Selina had indeed kept her promise to keep my secret, although I wasn't sure for how much longer.