

## Chapter 58 Keeping Secrets

### Moana

Edrick's eyes flashed with recognition as I refused a drink. I knew, then, that he was onto me. Edrick quickly disappeared into the crowd again, leaving me alone with Verona once more, but that interaction alone was enough to cause me such stress that I suddenly felt as though I was going to throw up.

"Excuse me," I said, pushing my chair back and standing. "I'll be back in a moment."

Before Verona had the chance to respond, I quickly turned on my heel and beelined for the bathroom, holding my hand over my mouth to keep myself from vomiting. Thankfully, the bathroom was empty when I entered, and I barely made it to the toilet before the contents of my stomach poured out.

When I was finished throwing up, I flushed the toilet and stood shakily, leaning on the side of the bathroom stall for a moment to steady myself before walking over to the sink. I took a few deep breaths and calmed my nerves before digging into my purse for a mint, then left to get myself some ginger ale to calm my stomach.

As I made my way to the bar, I felt weak and shaky, but not entirely from the nausea. Not only did I feel completely out of place at this party as the

only human, but I also felt that Edrick would potentially discover my pregnancy tonight... And I wasn't ready.

I leaned on the bar and asked the bartender for a ginger ale, trying my best to steady my nerves. Just then, I felt a tap on my shoulder. I looked up to see Kelly standing beside me. She looked drunk, but also contemptuously devious.

"Just a ginger ale?" she asked.

I nodded.

A smirk spread across her face. She glanced over her shoulder toward where Edrick was standing, then back at me, and looked me up and down.

"You know," she said, leaning closer to me, "from girl to girl... That dress isn't fooling anybody."

I frowned, taking a step back, and looked down at myself. I thought I looked perfectly fine. "What are you talking about?" I asked.

Kelly scoffed. "Let me be blunt. I know you probably grew up being half starved, so maybe you have some issues when it comes to controlling your appetite, but maybe lay off the fancy foods for a bit. Your belly is looking a little..." She stopped, then, and gestured with her hand around her stomach in an arching motion to indicate a round belly.

My jaw dropped at Kelly's rude words. "That's a nasty thing to say," I replied, narrowing my eyes.

Kelly simply shrugged and picked up her fresh drink off of the bar. "I'm just telling the truth," she said, before turning on her heel and sauntering off into the crowd.

I felt tears coming to my eyes, but I blinked them away. Once I had my ginger ale in my hand, I returned to Ella, who gave me a worried look as I sat down. So did Verona.

"Are you alright, dear?" Verona asked, eyeing my ginger ale.

I nodded. “Yes. Just a little too much sugar in that cake for my stomach to handle right now,” I lied. “I’m okay, though.”

Ella leaned over to me, cupping her hands over her mouth. “Next time, I’ll eat your cake instead,” she whispered.

Verona, overhearing this, threw her head back and laughed loudly. I couldn’t help but laugh, either.

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Soon enough, the gala ended and it was time to go home. I said my goodbyes to Verona and Sophia, ignoring the cold look from Kelly as I got into the car, and watched as the building faded away in the distance.

I looked over at Edrick, who was sitting across from me. He was staring out the window.

“That was a nice gala,” I said, wanting to ease some of the tension. We hadn’t said more than two words to each other since he asked if I would drink alcohol.

“Mhm,” was all he said.

“Your speech was lovely as well,” I continued. “You spoke very eloquently. It was nice to hear you speak so affectionately about the orphanage.”

Edrick’s eyes flickered over to me, and they were cold and bitter. He began to clench and unclench his jaw repeatedly, as he often did when he was angry. It made my heart race.

There was a long, uncomfortable silence. Ella seemed to notice this, and apparently decided to take it upon herself to lighten the mood.

“Daddy,” she said, swinging her legs from her car seat, “Grandma taught me a new joke tonight. Can I tell you?”

“Sure.”

“Okay. Knock knock!”

“Who’s there?”

“Orange!”

“Orange who?”

“Orange you glad to see me?”

I chuckled at Ella’s pun, but Edrick only exhaled sharply through his nose and returned to staring silently out the window. Ella looked over at me with a puzzled expression on her face. I reached out and squeezed her hand.

“I liked your joke,” I said. “You’re very funny.”

By the time we arrived back at the penthouse, despite Ella’s sugar consumption, she was already fast asleep. Edrick carried her onto the elevator, and when the doors slid open at the top, Selina was waiting for us in the foyer.

“How was the gala?” she asked quietly as she took Edrick’s suit jacket.

“It was lovely,” I began...

But I was quickly interrupted by Edrick suddenly spinning around to face me. “Did you have something important to tell me tonight?” he asked, rather brusquely.

I felt my heart leap into my throat. Ella still slept on his shoulder, which normally would have been a welcome relief, but now I wished she was awake more than ever — because if she was awake, perhaps Edrick wouldn’t have asked a question like that so suddenly and openly.

I opened my mouth to respond, but nothing would come out. From behind him, Selina stared at me with wide eyes, slowly shaking her head.

“Uh– No,” I replied, swallowing the lump in my throat. “Why?”

“Hmph,” Edrick muttered. Before anyone could say anything else, he turned around and marched off to Ella’s room. Once he was gone, I felt my body relax almost entirely, and now I felt even more exhausted than before.

“Go on,” Selina said, noticing my exhaustion. “I’ll bring you some more medicine in a little bit.”

“Thank you,” I whispered, then scurried off to my room.

Once I was alone again, I drew in a shaky breath. Surely Edrick knew about the pregnancy; even Kelly had mentioned that my belly looked bigger, and I was certain that Edrick had noticed all of the other signs. Would I be without a job tomorrow?

There was no use in puzzling over these issues, because what was done was done. I tried my best to push the anxiety away as I changed out of my dress and into my pajamas. I washed my face with cold water in the bathroom sink and brushed my teeth, wishing that things could just be different.

Not long after I climbed into bed, I heard a soft knock on the door.

“Come in,” I called.

Selina shuffled in. She had an entire bottle of pills in her hand this time, and poured two out into her hand as she approached. I noticed that the bottle had a logo of a wolf’s head on it and it seemed to be a multivitamin specifically for pregnant women.

“Here,” she said. “These should help with your symptoms. They’re stronger than the others I gave you.”

“Thank you,” I replied. I popped the pills into my mouth and washed them down with a gulp of water while Selina watched.

“I think you need to make a decision by tomorrow,” she said, shooting me a knowing look before turning and making her way back toward the door, the bottle of pills still in her hand. “If you’re going to keep it, you need to start making doctor’s visits. The pregnancy will be very hard on you as a human carrying a little werewolf.”

I nodded somberly, then watched as Selina quietly slipped out of my room. As I laid back on the bed, I felt more tears come to my eyes before I began to drift off to sleep.

I hadn’t been asleep for long, however, when I was suddenly alerted by the sound of my door opening abruptly.