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Oriana

She'd spent an entire week in her room. She thought it was for the best for her to stay away from everyone; well anyone that might pick up on that she was pregnant. She didn't want to get into it with anyone here, she needed Slade to find out before anyone else did.

She did not want him hearing about this from his father or hers, for that matter, not even from Palmer or Yuri.

No, this was something they needed to discuss just between themselves at first, before everyone else know so that they were on the same page, so to speak, figuring out what to do about it, and likely come up with a plan and course of action before they got back to the pack and everyone there found out.

So, they could present a united front about this to his and her father, whatever that plan was? They weren't Mates, though she had not come across him on a full moon yet, would though the night after he got home. Well, actually she wouldn't, he'd be off with his family, on that family run with his



little sister, when she shifted for the first time.

If they scented each other out he'd come and find her, and with a pup? Well, he'd likely just claim her. She wouldn't stop him if he was her Goddess Gifted Mate. She did know him, he was funny and could be charming. The girls all liked him, she knew that; he was never short of a she-wolf.

Hell, even now she knew he was at Alpha College sewing his wild oats in every Alpha-blooded female that would let him. She sighed, he'd told her he would, and she told him to go right on ahead. She didn't care. But right this minute, a part of her did care, and she knew it was stupid of her, and that it was only because she was pregnant with his pup, not because she wanted him for herself.

She had no claim on the man whatsoever, and wasn't likely to ever have one, if they didn't scent each other out. She was not going to be bound to him or have him bound to her either. No, it wasn't the dark ages. They could work out some sort of normal, sensible agreement over their pup.

They could live separately but both of them raised their child. He was the dad, and that pup was going to be considered the heir to this pack.

Slade's Heir and when he found his actual Mate



and Luna, that she-wolf would have to get over it.

It was likely her pup would be many years older than any he would have with his actual Luna, when he found her.

The ascension laws of the pack would come into place, and his firstborn, which would be the one she was carrying now, would be considered the heir, and that was all there was to it.

'Ori.' Yuri mind linked to her. 'Open your door. We really need to talk to you.'

She frowned, it was late, nearly 11pm 'why?' she asked, but got up. She looked down at her pj clad body, she hadn't really gotten out of her pj's in a week now. She pulled on a dressing gown.

'It's bloody important hurry up.' Palmer stated, and she could actually hear the urgency in his voice now.

She opened the door and the pair of them practically shoved their way into her suite, and her out of the way to barge in. Surely it couldn't be that important or urgent, they were only the future heirs.

"Sit." She stated and waved them to a seat on her couch. Neither of them sat, they were just staring at her in a kind of half-panicked state, she



realised. She frowned at them, there was no attack on the pack, no alert from their Alpha that anything was wrong at all. She couldn't see a reason why they would be looking at her like this at all.

"Calm yourselves boys." She shook her head "or who'd you accidentally kill and need me to hide a dead body from?"

"No, not that." Yuri waved it off "it's... well...fuck man, you tell her."

"If you're here to tell me I'm being stepped down, I already figured it out." She stated, "hence the pj's and no training."

"What?" They both stared at her now, then Palmer waved it off. "Oh don't worry about that, Slade still says you're his Beta to just bear with it."

She raised an eyebrow at him. Little did they know, "sit and spill it then." She murmured.

They both finally sat down, and she watched Palmer frown at her for a moment and then shake it off. She wondered what he was picking up from her, ignored it and sat herself down, switched off all her emotions and pulled on all of her Beta bloodline, so he wouldn't pick up on everything she felt.



"Um, we just overheard something about Slade."

"Got a Mate, did he?" she asked. "He's at Alpha College, it would be expected, what his father actually wants." She nodded and even knew it was

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the truth, his father did want that.

"No... it's worse than that." Yuri huffed.

"Just state it plainly, boys."

"His dad and the unit are down there discussing finding him a chosen Luna, and like now," Palmer told her.

That completely shocked her; to hear that. It was

not what she was expecting at all. "What? Why would they do that? Even I know Alpha Roman and Luna Elise want a Goddess Gifted for their son." It didn't make any sense to her at all.

"We don't know, don't even think they're trying to hide it. Were in there discussing Alpha females they already know from other packs." Yuri told her.

"Does Slade know?" She asked.

"We don't know." Palmer shook his head "we came straight to you, kinda freaked out."

She sighed, "Maybe you heard wrong."

"We did not." They both stated together.

"He's already got an offer from some girl's father, a girl at Alpha College... Audrey is her name, his current she-wolf even."

"Mm, the one he goes on about, likes her a lot."

She nodded, she'd even seen a picture of them together in the group chat. He sent it over to show them how pretty she was, a blonde, blue-eyed, very tall she-wolf, as tall as he was. Athletic and Alpha-blooded, just like he liked. It hadn't really surprised her, the only thing that had, was that they were dating officially, and he wasn't sewing his wild oats in any others at all now, just Audrey.

"She might be his Mate." She shrugged "
Alpha-blooded wolves can, at times, scent out
their Mates before the full moon. You both know
this."

"But he'd know, so why are there three others on the list?" Yuri shook his head.

"Three others? And there is an actual list?" She asked.

"Yes." They both nodded.

"What we heard, they're down there weighing up the pros and cons of those females, all four of them and not just their looks, their bloodline, the pack affiliation, what it will bring, everything." Palmer shook his head, sounded like he couldn't really believe it.

"It's bloody insane." Yuri sighed. "Do you think he knows or knew it was coming and just never said anything at all to us?"

"It's entirely possible," she nodded, and it was.

Palmer looked right at her. "There is another thought, Ori..."

"State what you think."

"Slade is adamant about keeping you... his father, your father even, are not. Keep stating it's because

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you'll mate off out of the pack at some point, right?"

She could only nod.

"What if this is their way around that, he's got a Luna, they Mate him off and bring his ascension forward to like what the laws state."

"When you get your Luna or at 30." She nodded, she knew the laws about the ascension of the next Alpha. "If he has a Luna now, and he's going to take over, the future of the pack is now, not in years to come."

"They're really pushing that, how you'll leave. Mate off out of the pack, and that's how they're going to convince him, to pull Hayden in now." Yuri huffed "it's much easier to replace a future Beta than an actual Beta. Harder for one to be brought into the group later in life, that's their agenda. I think."

"I've heard my father and yours talking about it, the disruption it will bring to the pack. If they leave you as the Beta and in say five or six years, you mate off out of the pack and leave."

"Hayden will just step up then," She stated.

"Slade doesn't really like your little brother, the way he is with you, particularly, all those little snipes, it Ch 17

actually bugs him quite a bit."

"He'll just get the next in line. That's the pack protocol if I leave." She shrugged.

"Don't you even care?" Yuri burst out.

"I care" she nodded, and she did. It now seemed they were both being screwed over by their own parents. "But really boys, what can I do about it? What can any of you do about it? It's not up to us...

They were both frowning at her, "honestly, are either of you going to go down there and argue with your Alpha? Your own fathers? It's also not our decision. It is for Slade himself to fight about, they can't make him take a Luna, he and his wolf have to agree to it." She told them.

"Do you think he will?"

"I don't know, I guess that depends on many things, and what we don't know goes on behind closed doors, within the Alpha suite itself."

"Do we tell him?" Palmer asked.

"It's likely he already knows if Audrey is on that list, he may well have put her on it as his own option." She sighed, who the hell knew. "Go to bed boys, try not to think about it, that's all I can tell you to

