

## CH 21

## Slade

He had expected calls from his unit about the fight that had broken out between his father, their Alpha, and Ori's father, their Beta. Something he had caused himself, over his statement of taking Ori to his bed and making her his Luna. Anders had clearly not liked it at all.

There was nothing though, from any of them, nothing about the fight, not even hours later. It was odd, surely, they were there to hear it and see it, likely to have had to step in and help haul them apart even. It was never easy pulling two fighting wolves apart, especially ranked members and an Alpha and Beta: the two strongest of the pack. That would be a bloody nightmare.

No one called him, or texted him, not his mother, not his sister Dariah, not his Gamma or Delta, not even Ori had called him about it. That in itself bothered him greatly, for a long time, and then he realised no one had yet to tell her of what he'd said, put his option to her.

So, he'd text into their group chat, the one that had the four of them in it. 'How's your day going?' just

to see what he would get back.

'Weird.' Palmer had texted him near instantly.

'How so?' he sent back. Though he was expecting or had been an irate phone call from Ori herself, about what the hell he'd done. He'd not gotten one

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at all. She was still ticked off about her position being in jeopardy, but she did text him back if he asked her a direct question.

He did know that she was really distancing herself from not just him, but the entire unit as well.

Palmer and Yuri had told him as much. She wasn't hanging out with them anymore, was locked away inside that Beta suite, though they also told him that she went clubbing and dancing nearly every night.

That she'd taken to wearing very little at all, when out clubbing, they were of the opinion she was in a full-blown rebellious state. And the more her father harped at her about her clothes, the skimpier they got as well, and the later she stayed out. Actively trying to piss her dad off, it seemed.

That Anders himself was worried about the girl's state of mind. He'd never seen anything like it and didn't understand where it was coming from, apparently. She'd been told they were just training Hayden up because he was the second heir, and he needed it, for when she mated off out of the pack, was all. That she was still the future Beta, that not even that had worked.

He'd also heard that her words to her father had ticked the man off, gotten a quote on that; "The Alpha told me to go and do what all 18-year-old girls do." And apparently that was exactly what she was doing. Acting like a defiant 18-year-old. Drinking and partying every night.

'Your dad and Anders wolfed out against each



other.' Yuri joined the conversation.

'Everything alright there?' He wouldn't know if his father banished the Beta's family over it.

'Apparently so.' Yuri responded.

'???' He sent.

'They're quiet but...' It was Palmer.

He sighed, he was likely getting the chance to find his Goddess Gifted at that rate, his own father had backed down. He knew Anders would never sell his own daughter off like that. He still thought of her as his little girl, only she wasn't so little anymore and was on a full defiant streak.

'So all good? Dad didn't do anything stupid, like banish the pack Beta and his family?'

'Not that we know of.'

Slade realised banishing the Vales would actually solve his father's problem. His thoughts stopped at that. Would his father go so far as to banish that family in order to get him to take a male Beta? The Beta had just wolfed out on the pack Alpha. His mind was racing now, and he put a call to his father, and it was picked up on the 4th ring: "Slade?"

No son, he noted, that wasn't a good thing, he only really got called Slade, for formal announcements, admonishments, or if his father was unhappy.

"Did you banish Anders and his family?" He asked.

"Not yet," his father muttered, "it will likely come tomorrow."

"Don't do it, father."

"Why not? The man himself attacked me over your crude word usage of Oriana."

"Then blame me and not the Beta's family."

"Anders, I believe, is already upstairs packing, likely knows it's coming, Slade. It's what all Alphas would do to a disloyal pack's Beta."

"Just don't do it."

"Why would I not? We have pack laws for a reason, and that will solve my problem with your Beta as well. I'm currently looking at the other affiliated packs, second Betas, for you, right now. There are half a dozen your age, so plenty for me to line up and you to run through the paces and pick one to your liking. When you come home from Alpha College in a year."

Slade was quiet for a long minute, so this was his



father's plan to get what he wanted. The man was doing everything he could to rid Ori from the Beta position, was going to go so far as to banish her entire family. He didn't understand it. He closed his eyes for a minute and really thought about what he could do to stop this. "What will stop you from doing that? Their family has been with ours for many generations."

"10 generations." His father commented, "and what do you mean, by what will stop me?"

"Negotiation."

"With who son would I negotiate with over this? Who's got something that I want? That can be bargained for to keep them here in the pack."

He sighed now because there was one, him, he was the one that could negotiate on her family's behalf and, seeing as it was going to be his fault her family was getting banished, it was up to him to stop it now. "I do," he muttered.

"Do you, what do you have? Explain that to me son."

"I'll give up Ori and take Hayden for my Beta, if you don't banish the family."

"Interesting, anything else, son?"

Slade closed his eyes, knew what the man actually wanted, for him to take a Chosen Luna, and one, of his father's choosing. He ran a hand over his face and sighed heavily, "A mating alliance for my Luna."

"And when will you be doing that? I want your word as an Alpha on that son."

"The full moon after next, I'm likely mated to Audrey. She's on your list, yes."

"Yes"

"Then father, I give you my word as an Alpha, the full moon after next, if I scent no Goddess Gifted Mate, you can choose my future Luna." He stated.

"It's a lot to give up, son, over one female Beta, don't you think?"

"No" he answered, and he didn't think it was a lot, she was one of his best friends, and he didn't want her leaving the pack over words he'd spoken about her, that had ticked her father off.

"So son, just to make it clear, you're willingly giving up Ori as your Beta, and accepting Hayden as her replacement. And you're agreeing to a mating alliance that I see fit for you, if you don't find anyone here on the full moon, and not Audrey

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on the next one, is that correct?"

"Yes father."

"And all I have to do, son, is not banish the Beta family?"

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"Yes" he agreed.

"All right. I believe, son, you just made your first Alpha to Alpha deal. Congratulations." He could even hear the happy note in his father's voice.

"Don't tell her, let me do it."

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"And you'll do that when exactly?"

"Before I come back to Alpha College," he muttered, "just let me find the right way to tell her."

"Good, best you do it from an Alpha position and not as her friend."

Slade ended the call and stared up at the ceiling. He could save her family from being banished with one hand, but was to lose her as the Beta with the other. He was also likely to lose her friendship as well, when he told her it was his choice to pick Hayden over her.

And he knew his father was going to make him tell her it was his choice. Because now it was his choice, he'd offered it up himself. His hand was not forced to do it, was willingly giving her up.

He texted his father an afterthought 'don't tell Palmer and Yuri, they'll tell her.'

'Alright, you made the right decision son, see you in a few days.'

A few days! He thought; until his Alpha Unit was mad at him, and he lost one altogether. He scrubbed a hand over his face, his life was going to s\*\*t, and he could do nothing about it.

He looked at Audrey when she came into his room

all smiles, after her classes for the day had finished, and watched her start pulling her clothes off. He could actually use a good distraction right now. Yanked her right on top of him.

He spent the next couple of days watching Audrey, really watching her, when they were together, her reaction to his very touch, even when not in bed and naked, but out on the campus grounds. The way she looked at him, because he wanted to know now if she was his Mate.

Did she already know? He listened to the moans that came from her while they had s\*x, and he teased and touched her, pleased her. How much she begged to have him, seemed to crave him and couldn't get enough of him, he noticed that even a single brush of his fingers down her arm or thigh got her undivided attention, turned her on and within a minute he could smell her arousal.

He looked down at her as she came for him tonight, the way she smiled up at him afterwards and just asked her the question. He was due to go home tomorrow. Ori was coming to pick him up. It would be her last official Beta duty, taking him home and away from Audrey for the full moon. "Do you already know I'm your Mate, Audrey?" He asked her straight out.



She bit her lip a little and nodded slowly, "I can feel it on my skin." she murmured, "can't you?" She asked him and slid her hands over his chest and down his body all slowly, sighing a little as she did so.

He didn't feel it, "no." He answered honestly.

"Pity." She murmured, but then she smiled up at him "you would really like it, the light tingle of sparks." She told him. "Your every touch is amazing to me," she looked up at him and then pulled his mouth down to hers and kissed him, "again, touch me again Slade, Goddess it's amazing to feel."

"You told your father already." He smiled down at her.

"I was naughty." She nodded and rolled over under him, "I might need a spanking." She batted her lashes at him over his shoulder.

"Yes, you do." he smiled, "and some slow tingly torture as well then." He growled a little down at her, and she giggled.

He had spent the night with her crying out his name and cumming for him, and again in the morning before classes, then had hauled her ass off to his room during lunchtime. She was all



desire and wanton need, even more so, now that he knew what she was going to be to him, she didn't have to hide it. She never said no, not to anything he wanted to do, and she was all over him.

He was in the shower with her trying to wash up before having to get in a car with Ori, for the long drive home, but Audrey was all pouty and needy, getting him all hot and bothered, even when he was trying to say no and getting dressed. Telling her he really had to go because he could see his Beta's car out in the pickup zone.

He managed to get dressed finely. "I'll stay in your bed." She pouted up at him, "I have to wait a whole month to have you claim me now."

"Yes, I'm sorry baby." He smiled, "I got family rules to abide by."

She'd yanked him down right on top of her and kissed him once more, giggled and messed his hair up. "I'll be naked and waiting when you get back."

"Just what I want." He'd smiled, rolled her over and cracked her on a bare ass. Before leaving the room, to her happy squeal.

Ori's car was in the pickup zone, and he smiled,

she looked to be sleeping behind the wheel. That was unusual for her. He drummed his hands all the way up the car's hood and was pressed up against the windscreen to smile down at her, shocked her awake he'd seen, she had been sleeping!

He was sad to be losing his Beta, but had gained a Goddess Gifted, how could he not be happy about that? His father could shove that mating alliance up his backside. He would scent Audrey and claim her in one month's time.

The news pretty much burst out of him the minute he was inside the car with Ori. He knew she'd be happy for him.



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