

## CH 28

Slade

"Son, you're here because we feel Ori is losing it completely."

"Well, whose fault is that? You screwed her over. She's pissed off, managed to somehow contain a full-blown bloodlust, is what Palmer stated." His eyes moved to Charlton.

"I felt it build, have seen it and felt it twice now, in my lifetime, it's not pretty. It has a very distinct feeling to it, from a Gamma's point of view; anger and fury that comes from both the human and the wolf together. Their emotions align and come together. They rolled their pain and feelings of betrayal into that anger. This forms very quickly and takes over in only a few minutes, because they both; the human and the wolf, are consumed with it." He nodded and sighed heavily, "kind of feels like how a tornado looks I guess, there's nothing else, no sadness, no fear, no joy, nothing other than a seething blinding rage within minutes, it swallows them whole, and they're lost to it. That is how she felt out there, but she managed to contain it. I've never seen one pull themselves

from it and shut it down before." He shook his head and actually looked confused.

"She was like that because you did this the wrong way." He told them.

"You were supposed to tell her on the way home."

"No, I said I'd tell her before I went *back* to Alpha College." He grated out.

"Well son, I thought you would do it in the privacy of the car on the way home, where it was just you and her, and no one could interrupt or overhear. You had six hours to explain your reasons why to the girl."

"Well, you thought wrong".

"I did, it seems. I couldn't undo it when I found out you hadn't told her as you came back into the pack. It was already done by the time you got home. The pack knew, I couldn't un-announce it."

He stared at the man and didn't say anything at all, there was no point. It was too late now. "Why am I here? At this hour?"

"Ori, son. She threatened to leave the pack."

Did that really surprise him, not really, he thought. "And you want me to do what exactly about that?"

He turned and looked right at his father after only a moment's thought, "why did she threaten to leave the pack? She is staying with Lindal as far as I know. I spoke to Lindal myself."

"She wouldn't talk to us, anyone. We waited until Charlton felt less anger from her when he tried to connect to her, and he was trying son. Just to feel her out, that was all not to actually speak to her at that time, and we waited until she felt calmer."

"It took well over an hour for her to even start to calm down," Charlton stated.

"Everyone got shut out the entire Alpha unit, both Palmer and Yuri, her own mother, the Luna even, no one was getting through to Ori." His father told him.

"Well, I wonder why?" His voice dripped with sarcasm.

"Son, we're just trying to contain her, keep her inside the pack until the full moon. We need her to stay here, it's important that she's here for the full moon. I was actually worried she was going to bolt from the pack. And then she kept cutting me off and wouldn't let me talk to her, so I forced a mind-link to be established, and I held it open, one she couldn't close-out. I told her that ignoring me was punishable. Which she knows actually would

be."

"Are you insane!" He snapped, "she bloody also knows all the laws, studies really hard, understands all the Beta's duties including punishments, what rules, regulations go with what punishments, what all the infractions are, everything she and I need to know, so we can dish out punishment when you're off pack territory."

"I was just trying to pull her into line, it worked in the past." His father sighed "she can't stand the thought of anyone thinking she's irresponsible."

"Yes, and there's a reason for that." His eyes moved right to Anders, "she needs her father's approval at all times, has been trying to win and get his approval all her life. That's why she falls into line."

"Yes, we know, that's why it should have worked." his father stated.

He snorted "Really, you don't know her so well then, she's not looking for his approval anymore. She stopped doing that weeks ago, the day I believe she went clubbing in that figure-hugging dress. Whatever you did to her that day, that's where you lost her. And she stopped caring about being responsible the moment she saw Hayden in her place, on the packhouse stairs."

"It's ingrained into her to be responsible, Slade." Anders told him. "Is currently lashing out, I understand, but we want her here for the full moon, believe that you and she will be mates, scent each other out on the full moon. Your anger around her rises quicker now, and it will continue to do so the closer the full moon gets, it's you, reacting to her actual emotions, part of your mate bond on display even though you don't scent her out yet."

"You all think I'm actually her Mate?" he raised an eyebrow.

"Yes," his father nodded, "I also think there's a high possibility she'd reject you, just to stay the Beta to the pack as well."

"What? Why would she?" He frowned at them.

"Because, son, she's desperate to keep her position as the pack Beta. Do you think she'd give it up so easily? She wants to be a female Beta, show that there can be such a thing."

"Still."

"Son, who would get her position as the Beta if she was mated to you and became the future Luna?"

He saw it now and sighed heavily "the one person she doesn't want to have it," he muttered.

"Correct."

Slade stood there and stared at them all now. Would she have rejected him to keep her Beta title? He didn't honestly know the answer to that. Then there begs the question of, if she did reject him, would he have kept her as his Beta? That would hurt every damn day, having to look at her as his Beta, and know she'd rather be his Beta, than his Luna.

Could he have lived with that if it was her decision? He didn't honestly know, he'd liked her for a long time, longer than he had likely ever admitted to anyone, not even himself, he was just standing now inside the Alpha's office, a place that would one day be his.

He had never thought about her not being by his side, standing next to him. In his mind she was always there. It's what he'd always wanted, but if she, they, were gifted to each other. He thought about that. No, he wouldn't want to see her every day as his Beta, it would kill him in all likelihood, so if she rejected him to be the Beta, he'd likely not keep her as his Beta. A double-edged sword and he knew it. Wanted her beside him always, but

could now see why their fathers had done what they'd done, in pushing Hayden's training forward and trying to remove her from her position before the full moon.

It was likely they were also trying to figure out how to keep her here in the pack, to get her to be the Luna to this pack, not just, the Beta, but with those Mate Bond laws, they could not actually tell him, or her, what they thought and try to push them together beforehand.

Because if they did and managed to convince them it was true, and both he and she accepted it, and she stepped down from the Beta position expecting to be the Luna. Hayden stepping up into that roll, and then they turned out not to be Mate's at all. She'd never get her position back as the Beta, because she willingly stepped down, and then they would also probably be ruined by that.

Hell, he knew they would be, because if they had both been convinced of it, he'd have pulled her into his bed, before the full moon had set, and would have been having what he'd always wanted, only to find out they were nothing to each other. It would ruin everything.

It was the very reason why those very laws were in place!

Though he also knew that if he'd been here on the last full moon and scented her out while up there on the stage next to her, he would have been more than happy to hear his wolf growl the word mine at her.

He would never have rejected her, would have claimed her damned fast. So that no other could have her, and he'd see those eyes that he loved so much, look up at him every morning, but standing here thinking about it now. Her, as not just his Beta. Would she want that? After everything she had gone through, all the hoops she had to jump through, just to prove she could do the job, and keep her birthright? He didn't know. He sighed she might not have accepted him as her Mate.

"Son," his father touched his arm and brought him back from his own thoughts.

"The mating alliance?" He asked, wanting answers to that question. Why, if they thought Ori was his Mate, would he need one?

"An idea to put to you, in case she rejected you, so you can move on from her."

"Removing her as my Beta?" He asked, though he was certain he now understood them and their line of thought, seeing their reasons why they had wanted to, and had removed her, from her position

as his Beta.

"If she isn't your Beta when you scent her out, there should be no issue with her accepting you as her Mate."

"Nothing for her to fight with herself about, debate internally." Anders told him. "Why, we pushed Hayden's training ahead so quickly, so she could get used to the idea of not being a Beta, and be open and willing to accept being your Luna. We were just prepping for that."

"You did it the wrong way," Slade muttered. "You should have told me what you thought all along. I could have talked to her a month ago and none of this would be happening right now."

"We couldn't, not with the mate bond laws. That would be considered coercion."

"Then you should have just waited to see what would have happened." He muttered, "but no, you just went about it in such an overbearing, I know best manner, when you don't truly understand the girl, and now she hates us all, me included, you were worried she was going to reject me, to be the Beta. Well now, she will just reject me because she hates me."