

Our Secret Obsession (Book 2)

Chapter 2

Chapter 2: Eyes Of Judgement.

Kane POV

I rechecked my watch, my foot tapping with mounting frustration. The heavy oak table was surrounded by Alphas, their gazes sharp and expectant. My father was at the head, speaking in his authoritative tone about borders and alliances. All of which I knew I should be focusing on, but honestly I could feel the tension in the room, and I knew it was partly because Knox was missing.

He should have been here half an hour ago. I shifted in my seat, trying to ignore the prickling sensation of judgmental eyes on me. These Alphas felt disrespected, and I couldn't blame them. The glares were almost palpable.

"Kane, you're awfully quiet," my father remarked, breaking my train of thought.

"Just thinking about the southern border," I uttered, managing a tight smile. "We need to strengthen our patrols there." I knew my voice sounded weak from the lies that stuck in my throat.

"Strengthen patrols? We need unity first. Your brother's absence doesn't speak well of your pack's leadership." An Alpha from across the table, Alpha Scott, snorted. I clenched my jaw, trying to keep my composure.

"Knox is on his way," I replied, hoping it sounded a hell of a lot more confident than I felt. As panic ate at my gut, I attempted to reach out to Knox through the pack mind link again, but I was met with a wall.

"Shut out, again." Rolo, my wolf, snorted dismissively.

"Damn it, Knox, where are you?" I hissed internally.

"Kane, are we sure your brother understands the importance of this meeting?" Alpha Matteo leaned forward, his eyes narrowing, he was known to take no prisoners when it came to other male wolves, and if I was honest with myself, intimidated the shit out of me.

"Pussy." Rolo laughed like I couldn't sense his internal fear.

"Of course he does," I snapped, though the doubt was gnawing at me. "He's just delayed." I bluffed, never wanting the ground to swallow me up whole more so than I did right now.

"Well, from what I have heard of your brother, he doesn't seem to take anything seriously." Matteo commented, his tone laced with mockery. I swallowed the growl that had formed in my throat because, as much as I wanted to bite back, I knew it would do us no good. We needed Alpha Matteo and his rogues.

"Plus he isn't wrong." Rolo chimed in, like that was fucking helpful right now. I lifted my hand to rub my eyes free of the migraine I felt brewing but paused as words filtered into my ears. Words that had my migraine thump louder and my vision blur with the anger I felt clawing at my chest.

"Least of all the mate bond" Alpha Scott chanted, my eyes shifted to his, refusing to break the seething hold my eyes locked him in until he offered me a remorseful nod and lowered his eyes. Like the waste of space, we all knew he was.

"Enough." My father cut in, his tone firm. "We need to focus. This is not the time. If Knox said he planned to attend, there must be a good reason for him to be postponed. Kane and Knox will be taking over soon. They know the importance of these meetings and the relationships they will form from them. Now there is a lot we all need to sort through. So, let's move on."

"We should discuss an alliance with the northern packs. Their territories border ours, a strong alliance could benefit both sides." I nodded, though my mind was still racing with pent-up fury. Luckily for Alpha Scott, I knew my father was right and I needed to show these Alphas that I was invested in this alliance, not insulting or fighting them at every small slight that was thrown my way.

"How do you propose we convince them? They've been quite reserved." Alpha Scott raised an eyebrow, his question fair but nonetheless meant to throw me off.

"By showing strength and conformity," I said, pointedly glancing at the empty chair where Knox should have been. "A united front, clear communication, and mutual respect." The room fell silent, the Alphas considering my words. Finally, Alpha Matteo spoke again.

"Actions speak louder than words, Kane. You'll need to prove this so-called unity." My father gave me a subtle nod, no doubt, to steady my temper that seemed to be bubbling just beneath the surface.

"Kane is right. We will demonstrate our strength and 'unity'" My father declared his eyes locked harshly on Alpha Matteo's. "And when Knox arrives I am sure he will put those doubts I understand you are having, to rest. This meeting is just the beginning of our journey, gentleman." I tried to focus on the discussion, but my thoughts kept drifting to

Knox. His absence was a glaring issue. I sent out another desperate attempt through the mind link.

"Knox, where the hell are you?" I growled, but again it fell on deaf ears.

"Still nothing." Rolo rasped. I forced myself to participate in the conversation, but the nagging worry wouldn't leave me. Knox was more than my brother; he was my partner in leading this pack. We can't afford any missteps now. Not when we were already on thin ice for our 'treatment' of our mate Charlotte and the pups she carried. Our pups.

As the meeting dragged on, I felt the weight of the Alphas' scrutiny. This wasn't just about alliances and borders; it was about proving that Knox and I could lead. And right now, Knox was making it incredibly difficult.

Our Father wrapped up the meeting, and the Alphas began to leave, their expressions a mix of scepticism and resignation. I stayed behind, waiting until it was just me and my father.

"Kane," he called out, his voice softer now. "You did well. But we need Knox here. This kind of absence can't happen again. I know he misses Charlotte and the pups."

"We both do." I stated harshly, not wanting to have this conversation again. Sensing my mood changing, his brows furrowed, and his lips thinned as he eyed me cautiously.

"What I mean.." He corrected himself. "...Is that I know he has taken Charlotte's move badly, but if he wants to ensure those babies are safe when she does return, he needs to.."

"I know." I replied, rubbing my temples, the last few weeks catching up with me. "I'll find him. I promise." I sighed more so because I knew exactly where I would find him.

"I trust you, son. We all do. Just make sure your brother understands what's at stake." My father offered a smile as weak as my own as he placed a hand on my shoulder.

"I will. He won't let us down again." I nodded, feeling the weight of his words, although unlike him I knew Charlotte would not be returning anytime soon. As I left the room, I tried to mindlink my wayward brother one last time.

"Knox, you better have a damn good reason for this." I growled angrily.

Silence, but then, faintly, I felt a connection.

"Sorry brother, did I fuck up again?" Knox asked into my mind. My eyes closed with frustration, his tone alone was enough to suggest he had never planned on attending the damn meeting.

"Stay there. I am on my way." I growled out as I let out a breath I didn't realise I'd been holding. At least he was alive. Which was becoming a daily worry, if I was honest with myself.

I just hoped I could talk some sense into him, before it was too late!

"He has to be sober for that, and he hasn't been sober long enough to piss in a pot, let alone have a serious conversation since Charlotte left." Rolo reminded me bitterly.

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