

## Chapter 4 - Agreement

Zara's POV

"What the heck was that about?" I asked when we entered the hallway, heading toward the oces.

Levi appeared even more withdrawn and melancholy after talking to his father.

"It's nothing," he said.

"Do not lie to me, Levi," I growled. "I am just as familiar with your father as you are. What was it that the two of you were ghting over?"

"Damit, Zara!" His hands clenched into sts as he snapped. "Leave it alone. I am capable of handling it on my own."

I wanted to say something, but the sound of laughter erupted from my father's oce, cutting me off.

"It seems like someone is with him," Kaya remarked, causing a shiver to run down my spine.

"Is it someone we know?" I asked.

Kaya took a whiff, her eyes narrowing.

"I am not sure," she uttered. "Yet there is a familiar scent lingering in the air, and it is coming from your father's oce."

The door to my father's oce screamed on its hinges less than a second later, and when it opened, I saw the enormous wolf I called father. He was grinning and appeared to be content about something.

"Damn," Levi mind-linked. "Your father appeared to be pleased with something."

I suppose the treaty-signing process went according to plan.

"Ah, there you are, Zara," my father said. "We were expecting you."

"We?" Looking back at Levi, I asked, startled.

I have never seen my father this happy before. For an Alpha with a short fuse, he was behaving a little strangely. This was not how he usually behaved.

I quickly turned to look at my father again, hoping to pick up some clue as to what the devil was going on, but all I saw were his beautiful, joyful gray eyes.

"We should probably head inside to see what all the excitement is about," Levi mind-linked me, sounding like himself again.

"Levi's mood swings are going to give me whiplash," Kaya remarked.

"I suppose so," I replied to Levi, as my heart began to race.

"Come, come; we cannot have our guest waiting," my father said, extending his arm and waving us in.

As we followed my father into his oce, Levi and I shared the same expression of confusion on our faces. His massive back was facing us, obstructing our view.

My eyes swept over the 6'9" Alpha; his gray hair was neatly combed, and for once, he appeared to be completely rested.

Was this what the quick trip away had done to him?

I froze in my spot when I smelled the faint scent of grassland, making my heart skip a beat.

"No! It can't be!" I let out an internal hiss. "He would not dare come here!"

"What the f'ck, Zara!" Levi bumped into me and growled behind me.

"Sorry," I mumbled, wide-eyed.

"What's going on with-" Levi's voice faltered when my father turned away from us and approached his table, conrming my worst fears: Noah f'cking Flinch!

"Is that?" Levi mind-linked, and I nodded my head.

"What brings him here?" He mind-linked.

"Come, come, have a seat, Zara," my father called out to me. "We have a lot to discuss."

I gave a nod and walked stiy over to the lone chair that was left open in front of my father's desk.

"Beta, you are welcome to sit," my father gestured toward the lover's couch near the wall.

Levi cast a sidelong glance at Noah and shook his head.

"Thank you, Alpha," Levi grinned stiy and said. "However, I would prefer to be at Luna's side.

My father's eyes swept over the two of us, expressing confusion with knitted eyebrows.

"Very well," my father said. "Suite yourself."

"Zara," he uttered next. "I understand that you are familiar with Alpha Noah."

I forcefully swallowed the lump that had appeared in my throat, and I slowly nodded my head.

"Great," my father said, sitting back in his chair with a smile forming on his lips. "Alpha Noah has also informed me that you are his fated mate."

"What is your father talking about?" Levi growled over the mind-linked. "Is he your mate? How come you have not told me? Are you keeping secrets from me?"

"Don't play the protective beta now," Kaya barked back at him, making Levi quiet. "You are giving me a bloody headache!"

I gave a nod in response to most of the questions, staying silent throughout.

I wanted to rip the smile from Alpha Noah's face as it appeared on the corners of his lips.

"Superb," my dad went on. "Alpha Noah has requested your hand."

All the hair on my body rose. The bastard was using my father to approach me.

"Is that so?" I nally found my voice.

Both my father and Alpha Noah nodded.

"Interesting," I said as I stood up. "Were you told by Alpha Noah that he rejected me more than a year ago?"

My father's smile wavered as Alpha Noah's face turned to ash.

Did Alpha Noah really believe I would just blindly obey an order from my father without a ght?

"He did what?" Levi roared behind me.

"There is more," I said. "He rejected me in favor of a mate he chose."

"Is that true?" My dad questioned; his face hardened, and his eyes shifted black—Marcus, his wolf, must be ghting for control.

"It is," Alpha Noah admitted. "Nevertheless, I can explain. I was given a love potion by my chosen mate in hopes that I would fall in love with her and make her my Luna. It was not until I rejected Zara, feeling her pain, that the spell broke, and I came to my senses."

"Liar!" Kaya growled, grabbing control and extending her claws. She wanted to rearrange Noah's face.

"Calm your wolf, Zara," my father ordered.

Levi's arms snaked around my waist, and he pulled me back to the back of the oce. Kaya was outraged, and she didn't stop ghting against his hold.

"Why haven't you told me?" Levi eventually asked when I could regain control. His eyes revealed pity, which was the exact reason why I didn't want him to know.

I inhaled deeply. Since the secret was already known, lying about it would not make things better.

"There wasn't much to tell you," I said. "He kissed his chosen mate and rejected me in less than two minutes."

"Damn, I am sorry," Levi said, pulling me into a bear hug.

"Don't be," I said as I slowly withdrew. "It is better this way."

I sighed.

In less than a day, word of my rejection will get around the pack, and everyone will feel sorry for me.

My gaze moved toward my father; he and Alpha Noah were in a heated argument. All of a sudden, my father's smile returned as he nodded.

"Oh, no!" Kaya grunted. "What did Alpha Noah say?"

"We better nd out!" I hissed. "Before--"

"Are you still in control?" Levi asked, seeing my face harden.

I gave a nod.

"Kaya is just upset," I explained. "She doesn't like Noah much."

With a nod from Levi, we headed back to my father's desk together.

"Zara," my father said gently. "After discussing the situation with Alpha Noah, I have made a decision."

"Decision?" I gasped, feeling my heartbeat racing up. "What kind of decision?"

"Well," Alpha Noah said. "I am willing to give us another chance since you have not found a second chance mate yet."

Was he f'cking serious right now? And my father agreed to this?

I turned to look at my father; he seemed happy with the arrangement.

"Willing?" I glowed with disgust. "I am not interested."

"Zara," my dad, glared at me menacingly. "You will not be able to assume leadership of the pack if you are not mated."

I wrapped my arms around my waist. I am familiar with the pack regulations. Without an Alpha, a she-wolf cannot lead a pack; however, an Alpha can lead a pack without a Luna.

I rolled my eyes. Our pack's politics are so incredibly complex and unfair.

"Who said that I don't have a mate?" I asked.

That startled all three of the wolves, who were now staring at each other, confused.

"Levi and I have agreed to be chosen mates," I continued. "It's better this way. Levi is well-versed in all the rules and regulations and is well-liked by all. He will be a wonderful and just Alpha."

The three wolves gave me a skeptical look.

"What are you doing, Zara?" Levi mind-linked me when he nally realized what I had just said. "That is not something we have ever agreed upon. You know I can't...."

"Just go with it," I mind-linked back.

"No!" He growled over the mind-linked. "I can't lie to your father. This isn't right!"

"We are not lying," I mind-linked. "We are just buying some time."

"Beta Levi, is this true?" My father asked.

My heart hammered against my rib cage as Levi appeared like a deer caught in headlights. I crossed my ngers and hoped that Levi would go with it.

"Come on, Levi," I mind-linked him. "I am unable to pair with this cunning weasel. Look at him. Something is not quite right in this situation. He cannot become the leader of the pack. He will destroy everything our fathers built."

Levi looked at me, then back at my dad.

Shutting his eyes, he forcefully swallowed.

"Yes, Alpha," he replied as he gradually opened his eyes. "We have put such an agreement in place."

I interrupted Noah as he was about to say something.

"Are we done?" I asked, getting to my feet. "Can we leave now?"

My father nodded but cleared his throat when Levi and I both reached the door. Both of us looked back at my father, anticipating his nal comment.

"Oh, no!" Kaya whimpered. "I know that look!"

"It means trouble is..."

"Zara. Beta Levi," my father turned serious. "Kindly be aware that your mating ceremony will occur on the next full moon."

My heart plummeted—that was this weekend.

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