

My Alpha's Retribution: Rising from the Ashes of his Vengeance

C10

The Iron Claw Pack

CHARLENE

I WAS TERRIFIED FOR YILEYNA. With every passing day I wondered if she was okay. She was alone, and although I knew Theon loved her, after his deceit, I didn't know what to think. I was trying to tell myself he wouldn't let anything happen to her, but I was terrified, too.

She was brave, but she was all alone. It was hard for Gamma Grayson, too, knowing that his mate was left behind, but there was no other choice. I hadn't told him about who I was because I didn't want it to become an extra burden for him. I was okay with him not knowing.

Knowing that Mom and Dad were killed felt painful. Even if they weren't fully good people, I still loved them. Dad's death had hit me harder; I just wished I could have told him goodbye and that I loved him. Even if he wasn't my biological father, he was the one who raised me, and had always treated me better than Mom.

We had travelled to two packs, however Obsidian Shadow Pack guards stood at the entrances, and we were not even able to meet those Alphas. It was obvious they were either looking for us or keeping an eye on everyone.

Would no one stand up to Theoden? It seemed not. He was known for his ruthless ways. It was Raiden who had suddenly decided we should go to the one pack that was powerful and neutral to all. The Iron Claw Pack, home to the infamous Alpha Hunter Slade Carson...

"This is going to be hard. Hunter doesn't deal his hands in political matters," Gamma Grayson said as we stared at the huge iron walls that surrounded the pack. Foot-long blades crowned the wall, and every two metres apart, I saw there were guards on watch duty. But as suspected by Gamma Grayson, there was not one Obsidian Shadow Pack wolf here.

“What are those...” I murmured, seeing something move from around the walls.

“His moat, a moat full of serpents,” Ryan added with a low whistle. “I thought it was a damn joke...”

“Oh, it’s very real. Hunter became an Alpha at the age of eleven, two years before he shifted. He is currently the youngest recorded shifter alive, having gotten his wolf at the age of thirteen,” Gamma Grayson commented. “He’s powerful.”

“That is so cool!” Rhys exclaimed. It had been hard for him, having to travel like this, and often he spent his time with me when the men were more restless and angrier.

“Well, we have nothing to lose. Hunter is one Alpha who didn’t bend to Andres, unlike many who yielded to him due to him being a king,” Gamma Grayson replied.

“Well then, let’s go ask for this badass, shady-as-fuck Alpha’s help. Oi, Charlene, maybe you can use some charms on him?”

“Do not be disrespectful to the princess,” Gamma Grayson warned him. Ryan shrugged.

“She wasn’t the king’s real daughter.” That did hurt, but I simply smiled as Gamma Grayson’s irritation rose.

“It’s okay, and I don’t want to be called Princess either, Gamma Grayson.”

“Also, if you continue to be childish, Ryan, I’m sure our Alpha will remove you from the position of Gamma,” Raiden added with a smirk.

“Well, let’s go meet Alpha Hunter who will help us!” Rhys said confidently. I hoped, at least not to break his heart, he would agree to help us.

We left our hiding spot in human form, and I held Rhys’s hand tightly. Immediately we were spotted, and several bows and arrows were turned upon us.

“We wish for an audience with Alpha Hunter Slade Carson,” Raiden said loudly, raising his hand in surrender as he stepped forward.

I looked into the dark moat of water. Although we were still very far, I could see something move beneath the surface. My grip on Rhys tightened, and I moved him behind me. Although I knew we were a good few metres away, those things were huge, and I knew they could come out of the water.

“State your business!” The man shouted, scanning us all.

“We are here on behalf of the Silver Storm Pack,” Gamma Grayson said, placing a hand on his chest.

The man frowned, exchanging a look with one of the other guards before he gave a curt nod. He seemed to be mind-linking as we all waited nervously. Raiden glanced over at Gamma Grayson, frowning slightly, and I knew they were mind-linking.

Do you think he’ll agree to see us? I asked nervously.

I hope so, Raiden replied.

“Names!” The man called.

“Beta Raiden Bolton, Princess Charlene Aphelion, Gamma Grayson Sanchez, with his son Gamma Ryan and my younger brother, Rhys,” Raiden answered clearly. “As you must have heard, Alpha King Andres is dead. Yileyna De’Lacor is our new Alpha and is currently in the hold of Theoden Hale.”

The man nodded before we heard the grinding of the drawbridge being lowered. My heart lurched as I saw the crossing. Goddess, it was so narrow, and there were no supports on the sides. I swallowed hard before giving Rhys a brave smile.

“Don’t worry, Princess, I’ll hold on to you tight,” he whispered. I nodded, giving him a cute smile. What a brave boy he was without his parents, yet he was still acting so strong.

“Cross!” A man shouted.

“Thank you,” I replied softly to Rhys before Raiden led the way.

It wasn’t big enough for more than two people to walk side by side. Rhys followed Raiden, whilst Ryan stepped up behind me with Gamma Grayson at the back. *It’s just a few metres... you got this, Charlene.*

I kept my gaze on the other side, which was at least twenty metres away. Goddess, this man had planned this. How dangerous to have such a moat! I heard the hissing of a serpent at one point, seeing its long body under the moat.

“Keep going. If you scream, they will react!” The man shouted.

I nodded, although my heart was ringing in my ears. The moment we reached the other side, I let out a shaky breath, and Raiden smiled at me.

“You did well,” he said as we waited for the huge gates to be opened.

Goddess, their security was better than that of Westerfell. We stepped inside to see the area was huge. It was a full village in here, yet there were only warriors in sight. Most were well-built with scars that spoke of many battles fought.

I heard footsteps, and that familiar, seductive smell of none other than Alpha Hunter approached. I suddenly felt very self-conscious, knowing I was covered in dirt and all I was wearing were worn-out leather pants and an oversized shirt. I don’t know why it mattered, but I was unable to stop myself from trying to smooth my shirt and tilt my chin up.

“Well, well, who would have thought anyone from the Silver Storm Pack would be so kind as to visit a simple Alpha like me?” He said mockingly, clasping his hands in front of him as he tilted his head. He looked as handsome, if not more, than the day I saw him at the ceremony in a fitted shirt, pants, and boots. A few strands of his hair fell across his forehead, although most were messily tied back.

“You are no simple Alpha, Alpha Hunter. However, we had no choice,” Raiden said quietly, glancing at the guards.

“My men are loyal. Speak,” he commanded before his gaze fell on me. Our eyes met, and my heart skipped a beat as a small smirk crossed his lips. “On second thought, I don’t think it’s fitting to make such a pretty lady stand and wait when she looks... exhausted. Come, I will give you a place to rest.”

We were led through the village. The houses were humble, but they were strong and rigid. Shops and food stores were aplenty, and although I knew Alpha Hunter owned the lands around the fortress, it was obvious everyone stayed within the safety of these walls. We stopped at what looked like barracks or a pack house, and he entered, leading the way to the left. After a flight of stairs, he stopped at a door and took the key that hung on a hook.

“I’m afraid we don’t have many rooms. If the Beta is okay to share with his brother?” Hunter asked.

“Of course, thank you, Alpha,” Raiden said with a nod, yet he didn’t go in. Hunter smirked as he continued down the hall. He gave the next room to Gamma Grayson and Ryan before he stopped at a third door further down.

“And the room for the lady,” he smirked as Raiden opened the door, stepping inside. “I’ll have one of my Omegas bring you clean clothes. Rest, you are safe here,” he added to me, his tone dropping an octave, making me nervous.

“Perfect. Thank you, Alpha Hunter. I do apologise for the quick check, but she is important to our kingdom and our Alpha.”

“Ah, of course, she is.”

Our eyes met before I mumbled an ‘excuse me’. I took the key from Raiden and entered the room quickly. Goddess, he was such an intense man. I closed the door and looked around. It was modest yet clean. There was a wardrobe on the left side with a high chest of drawers, a mirror, and a vanity table. When I saw the bed, I had an intense urge to run and jump onto it, but I needed to bathe first. I looked at the door across the room, hoping it was a bathroom...

Half an hour later, I stepped out of the bath, wrapping a towel around myself whilst I used another on my long hair, which was once again vibrant and clean. That had been the best bath I had ever had. Never had I ever appreciated clean water as I did today. I stepped into the bedroom and almost jumped to see a middle-aged woman placing clothes into the wardrobe. She instantly stopped and bowed her head to me.

“I apologise for alarming you, my lady,” she said politely.

“Not at all.” I waved my hand, spotting the basket that sat on the bed.

“The Alpha sent clothing and some items for you,” she said, gesturing to the basket.

“Thank you...” I said, not expecting this kind of hospitality from an Alpha rumoured to be so dangerous. But did he have other motives? My heart sank, remembering the way his eyes had raked over me at the ball.

“Thank the Alpha, my lady, not me. Would you like any assistance?”

“Not at all, thank you,” I answered. She nodded, closing the top drawer.

“Once you are dressed, please come and join us for dinner,” she replied before taking her leave.

I quickly locked the door and walked to the chest of drawers, taking out some panties. I slipped them on and walked over to the wardrobe to look at the clothes. To my dismay, they were all dresses.

I took out a dark green one which had long sleeves with a boat neck and a flared skirt that reached below my knees. Slipping it on, I added a black corset belt before I quickly got to work on my knotty hair...

Ten minutes later, I left my room to see Ryan and Raiden, both already dressed and standing there waiting for me.

“Well, let’s get this over with,” Ryan remarked as Rhys and Gamma Grayson joined us. We were then led by two guards. I hoped he agreed to help us because we truly needed his help...

Thirty minutes had passed, and I was a mess of nerves. We had entered the hall only for the Alpha to motion for me to take the seat to his right, complimenting me that I looked beautiful, but it was how his gaze kept finding mine that made me nervous. To make up for it, the food was warm and tasty. We had not had a hot meal in days!

We had explained our full situation to him, including how Yileyna is the heart of our world. Although we weren’t sure if he would believe us, he didn’t argue about it, simply listening, and let us speak as we put everything on the table. It was mostly Raiden and Gamma Grayson who did the talking, with Ryan and me inputting a little.

He seemed to have frowned at certain points, but he said nothing, not until we were done, having no idea what he was thinking as his face remained emotionless.

“So... you are not even able to get in contact with your allies because of the Obsidian Shadow Pack guards... Andres was killed, and his daughter is held captive. Theon betrayed you all...” He ran his fingers through his short beard thoughtfully.

“Yes. We are being sought out, and, on our way here, we heard Theoden has commanded for us to be brought back to him, dead or alive didn’t matter,” Ryan added. Hunter nodded before he sat back, placing his knife and fork down.

“Tell me, was your king any better than Theoden?” He asked. “Why do you think you should get Westerfell back?” I frowned at his question as Gamma Grayson spoke up defensively.

“Of course, Alpha Andres was hardworking, fair-”

“We cannot answer that, but what we can say is that right now, there are innocent people being held captive, and this is not about Father, but Yileyna, the heir to that throne, not

because she was the king's real daughter, but because she is the heart, and therefore the rightful ruler. She is a person who stood up to the king countless times. Please, don't do this for Father, but for the new Alpha, for Alpha Yileyna of the Silver Storm Pack, "I said softly yet clearly. Hunter tilted his head, smirking slightly.

"Smart answer... however, why should I risk my men? What do I get in return?"

"What does the Alpha wish for? I am sure Alpha Yileyna would agree to your demands, within reason," I replied.

"A hand in marriage," he replied, picking up his knife, shocking us all.

"We can't promise you that she'll agree," Raiden said sharply. I saw his eyes flash, possessiveness clear in them.

"How do you expect us to give our word to something that is not in our control to agree to?" Gamma Grayson asked. Despite staying calm, he was clearly worried. We needed his help, and the situation was tricky. Hunter himself simply raised an eyebrow, that same tiny smirk playing on his lips.

"Then why don't I ask her myself?" He suggested before turning to me. "Tell me, Princess Charlene, is my army and support an offer fair enough for your hand in marriage?" Rhys and I both gasped as I stared at him.

"M-Me?" I asked, confused. He leaned over, forcing me back in my seat, my heart thumping as that tantalising smirk crossed his lips.

"If I'm going to choose a woman, it will be one who is equally ravishing in looks as she is in character. I'm certain that you will make a fine Luna. So, what will it be? My help is in your hands, Princess," he asked huskily.

My heart thudded as his words rang in my mind. I had always been told that I should choose a man who would benefit the kingdom... agreeing to an arranged marriage was not something so foreign, and if Alpha Hunter was willing to have me, then I would do this. For my people, my kingdom, and my sister.

You don't need to agree, Raiden's quiet voice came into my head, but I looked into the eyes of Alpha Hunter, my mind made up.

"I accept your offer."

The eight elements

- Wind
- Water
- Fire
- Earth
- Lightning
- Shadow
- Light
- Ice