

Chapter 41 Fight The Fight

ELIANA.

I jerked up from the floor, barely avoiding being trampled upon by the agitated members of the Pack who searched for a way to flee the crumbling building. The structure could barely contain such an uproar and Jaxon bursting through the roof did severely more harm than good.

Screams echoed around me as I lifted my gaze. One second, I saw Nora and the next, she had disappeared. She had made it clear that she wanted to fight me, from the marks she'd sliced across my face and the low growling that seemed to stem from thin air.

"I know you're up there!" I yelled, the structure returned an echo once everyone had left but it also groaned and threatened to collapse around me. "It doesn't have to end this way—" But before I could even complete my sentence, there she came, pouncing from the walls and landing across my body. I fell to the ground with a heavy thud.

She parted her mouth open and a drop of wolf saliva fell across my face. Her claws dug into the sides of my neck as she howled.

"Nora. Nora!" I screamed. "Please don't do this. It doesn't have to end this way" I kicked my feet in the air, fighting back. Somehow, I was able to get her off me but I could only go so far.

She shook her head.

"It was pretty stupid of you to come back here. You thought Jaxon would just let you challenge him and then go scot-free. He doesn't care what anyone else thinks, not you, not the Pack" Nora gritted as we circled each other. Part of the roof fell in at that moment, adding a palpable urgency to the confrontation.

"He can't be the Alpha of this Pack" I replied.

"He's not good for this Pack and you know it—" "What I know or think, it doesn't matter" Nora replied. I batted my lashes. "Jaxon wants to be Alpha of this Pack and whatever he wants, he gets" Nora continued.

"What about what you want?" I asked Nora. She never struck me as someone who had a mind of her own. "How long are you just going to be obeying him? You've made it your life's work to be his servant. His slave"

"And if there's someone who understands being pushed around, it's me!" I raised my voice and an emotion flashed across her face. I was getting to her, little by little which was exactly what I wanted.

"You can be something, Nora. You can be something other than this and when I'm Alpha or Luna, I'll make sure I take you along with me" I added before a scoff escaped her lips.

"You think Jaxon hasn't already promised me something?" She croaked and I pressed my lips together. "Because he has, and I only have to do one thing" She came to a halt and I arched my brows.

"And that is to kill you." She muttered. "He'll handle Denver himself"

"Nora," I interrupted her growl as her eyes began to shimmer in anger. "It doesn't have to end this way" I stretched out my arms. "Don't you understand?" She whispered. "You can't give me anything if you're not even going to survive tonight" She said before a fierce snarl escaped her lips. She lunged at me, throwing my back against the wall.

I gasped, falling to the ground again but this time with a spearing pain that ravaged my body. My hands crushed the debris from the building and the cement. I lifted my eyes to see that it was already falling in. I didn't have much time and this was no way I was going to die.

Absolutely not tonight.

Not when I'd already promised Denver I'd make it out. That was the only reason he left, even as hard of a decision as that was. But he was going to save my father, there was no way I would then die.

And so with my hands clenched in a tight fist and a rageful sting that ignited in my chest, I summoned my wolf who was already boiling and itching beneath my skin. It was easier this time.

"Like I said, it didn't have to end this way" I looked at Nora one last time before thrusting myself at her. We rolled across the ground as we tore at each other's fur. Her eyes went wild and untamed as broken beams littered across the floor.

I jerked her off me and she landed on the ground. With one limb around her neck, I drew her close before sinking my teeth into her back. She let out a painful growl before erupting in even more anger. I looked back and forth at the top of the building but she got to me.

Although I dodged her attack, Nora was still able to counter with a quick and calculated strike. She had wounded me because blood spilled to the ground at that moment and it wasn't hers. I felt a sting in my chest before I looked down at where her claws had sliced through.

The walls of the Ballroom started to crumble as she launched at me again but this time, the metal from the roof came tumbling down as it dashed her in the back of her head. Something as heavy as that was bound to leave a lasting injury as Nora fell forward to the ground.

I leaped from beneath her, aiming towards the door before the whole building collapsed in on the both of us. But then I came to a halt, throwing a look over my shoulders. She was gasping in pain across the floor. I couldn't just leave her there, could I?

The next few seconds were a mental battle as the words of that woman echoed back in my ears.

"It's dangerous being that kind in today's world"

I closed my eyelids, shaking the thought out of my head. Because deep down, Nora was still my stepsister and she wasn't the enemy. She didn't deserve such a horrible death. And so I swung in her direction, lifting her in my arms before bringing her out of the wreckage with me.

As soon as I emerged from the building, I looked up to watch every piece of it scattered across the ground. The walls caved in and the building gave way. Dust and debris filled the air and clouded my vision. But when I looked back at the ground, Nora was gone.

Only the pool of her blood that had stained the concrete remained. I heaved a deep breath out of my lips as the winds blew into my face. Yet another near-death experience I'd only narrowly escaped.

I kicked my feet forward in the chaotic darkness of the night. My ball gown was torn and ripped and the transformation but it still made for a sufficient cover. At least until I was able to get back to the Pack or come across someone who may be of help.

I held the frails around my chest as I limped forward. Nora had wounded me and she had wounded me badly.

It was then I heard a shrill movement echo from behind. I threw a glance over my shoulder to find no one. But my stomach instantly tied in a knot.

The winds blew eerily and you would think because the ball was merely a few hours earlier that someone might still be around but there was no one along the road, no one but me and the trees in the forest.

I searched my pocket for my phone but of course it had been misplaced.

A shadow dashed past the periphery of my eyes. Someone was here.

"Nora!" I called out, my first instinct leaning that it may be her. "I saved you already. Let's just end this" I turned around until my back scraped against something hard, like a tree. Or so I thought.

Because a hand suddenly clamped my lips as I screamed. I bit into the leather gloves and I heard a masculine growl. It wasn't Nora. It was someone in a mask. I wriggled my way from his grasp before running in the opposite direction. I ran and ran as fast as I could.

Until my lungs started to burn. But there was no escaping.

"Where do you think you're going?" He suddenly appeared in front of me and this was someone I'd never met before. I felt the pinch of a syringe go through my neck before my eyes started to blacken. My knees drew to the ground as I muttered very frailly.

"Help!" I felt my body being lifted in the air and placed on his shoulders.

I was weak and the last thing I remembered was being thrown into the back of a car. My mind went to Denver, I hoped he was safe wherever he was and that he was able to save my father.

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DENVER.

"Stop right here!" I let out a thunderous howl that echoed throughout the forest and brought Jaxon to a sharp halt. His arms fell next to him before he looked back around.

I breathed heavily through my lips.

"What are you doing here?" Jaxon cooed. "Really brave of you to have left your mate behind" There was a sarcastic undertone to his malicious voice. "No wonder you were with her that day. Was this your plan all along—to overthrow me?" Jaxon inched closer to where I stood.

"You can't exactly overthrow someone who isn't Alpha yet" I gritted through my teeth before Jaxon made the mistake of sticking his fist in my face. His eyes glimmered with strength and desperation.

"Come on" He lifted his fists in the air. "Let's go down here. I'll beat you as a human today and as a wolf later" He muttered before striking a second time. I hit him.

He hit back.

The towering trees cast our shifting shadows as we entered into a brawl. Jaxon was ruthless with his punches, though I was able to dodge more than half of them, to be able to strike back more calculatedly.

"You know you could've just stayed in your lane" Jaxon muttered. "I wasn't raised to abandon my mate" I glazed and he chuckled. "Mate?" He laughed. "Can you hear yourself? To be mated to a fucking slave?"

"I would watch my mouth if I were you" Anger blazed my eyes as he chuckled again. "There is nothing an Alpha could possibly have in common with a slave. You save her today but what happens tomorrow?"

"Don't you see it's a curse? Jaxon asked. "But you and I, think of what we could do if the Packs unite. Think of how strong we'll be." He narrowed his eyes and there was a brief silence between us.

"You and Eliana would never last and deep down, you know that." I clenched my fist with a rage I hadn't felt in a long time. Jaxon walked towards me before I brought him to the ground and the leaves crunched beneath his back. I growled under my breath before striking him in the face, over and over again.

"I said watch your mouth!" Because there were so many lines one could cross but Eliana wasn't one of them. My eyes blurred with rage as I hit Jaxon repeatedly. He started bleeding against my knuckles but I couldn't hold myself back. I kept punching him until life was barely in his eyes.

And this was the part of me I spent so long trying to control. I couldn't kill Jaxon, not now. Not here. The only way to win was through the Alpha battle but I didn't stop. Not until I heard an ear-splitting rumble behind.

My eyes immediately turned to the Ballroom building that had collapsed.

"Eliana!" Fear flashed in my eyes as I pulled away from Jaxon. He turned to his side, gasping and coughing blood. It was then I realized what I'd done but I didn't waste a second in turning back around.

"I shouldn't have left" As I ran through it, the forest came alive. Leaves and twigs rustled with each step I took. Her face remained behind my eyes as I thrust further up until I got to the building. And it had fully crumbled to the ground. I fell to my knees, tears surfacing in my eyes.

"Eliana!" I called out her name. And the silence felt like a sword slicing through my chest. There was no way I could get in and if she was still in there, no way I would be able to ever forgive myself. But then my bloody knuckles fell to the ground and my fingers grazed something.

I brought my eyes to the pool of blood right beside me and the footsteps that led into the woods. I stood up, recognizing her feet. "She made it out" I followed each step until the furthest and then, it just disappeared.

I came to a halt as I crouched low to the ground. There was something stuck in the earth and when I tugged at it, the ropes fell into my hands.

It was Eliana's necklace which was broken in the sands.

And I clenched it in my hands, lifting my eyes to the winds. I couldn't shake off the feeling that something terrible had happened to her, even though she escaped the collapse.

I gazed into the darkness. If this night was anything, it was a disaster.

"Eliana" I called her name softly as tears formed in my eyes but the forest returned a void echo. She was gone. Just like that, she was gone.

And the worst part was that I wasn't able to protect her.