

## Chapter 47 The Sacrifice

DENVER.

"Where the fuck are you, Cory?"

I gritted through my teeth as I placed the phone against my ears. With one hand holding only Elijah behind me, I clung to the walls as I made my way to the back of the PackHouse. That was where those buildings were, especially the one with the mountain symbols that Elijah saw.

"Is mommy here?" He whispered. I squeezed his hands before he clamped his lips shut, remembering what I'd told him—to be as quiet as possible. Hell, I wouldn't even have been on this call if my Beta Cory had just replied to his text.

"Alpha Denver, you were the one who directed me back to Blood Hounds after the incident. I already left this morning with the troupe" Cory replied and I pinched the bridge of my nose with a sigh from my lips.

I wanted him to come and carry Elijah and tend to him while I handled Blake but I just remembered his other assignment. I looked back and forth, halting at the entrance of the building.

"So who's around now?" I asked him. "Not many people" He replied.

"Well, just send one pers—" I shook my head, the lack of trust bridled in my voice, especially with Jaxon, Sienna, Nora, Elyndra and Blake running around with vengeance.

I wasn't sure Elijah was safe anywhere else than with me.

"What's going on?" Cory asked.

"Blake is in the Pack-house, and he has Eliana. I'm happy not many people are around now—" "What? How?" Cory almost exclaimed. "I'll have a troupe back to the Pack if you wish, Alpha."

"Don't worry" I hissed. "If it's Blake, I can handle him" I muttered. "The only thing I wanted was someone to take care of Elijah," I added and for a moment, there was a brief pause.

"Eli—who?" Cory bickered. I rolled my eyes to the back of my head, enough time had passed. It was well into the morning and almost noon by the time we'd gotten here. But for some reason, heavy clouds hung over Tombsdale and there was an eerie feeling of gloom in the air.

It was the days after Autumn, what we called the dark days here. It was no wonder but as expected, it was even darker inside the PackHouse.

"Stay close and stay as quiet as you can. Under no circumstances should you let go of my hands. Do you understand?" I cautioned Elijah and he stared blankly with his eyes. There was as much fear in them so I doubted he'd say anything anyway.

"Come on" I roped him into the back of the building. And he was right because as soon I stepped in, Blake's scent oozed into the air. Eliana, on the other hand was so faint but I could make do with that.

"This way" I pushed open the doors, gauging by the walls as I trailed her scent up until I got to the dungeon. Now, this place was like a whole other world from outside. It was cold, dark but there were candles littered around. As soon as the door creaked open, I heard the shrill sound of metal chains echo through the air.

I froze for a moment, before I heard her voice.

"Denver?" Eliana called and it was no surprise that she'd scented me too. I thrust myself forward and Elijah too as he yelled.

"Mommy!" His voice was overcome with so much relief that he immediately ran into her arms. I walked up to her, the first thing I did was wear the necklace around her neck like I'd promised Abigail.

"Denver, you came!" Eliana muttered with so much relief in her voice. Once I wore the necklace, I reached for her chains to set her free but then she yelled. "Don't!" It was albeit late because as soon as my fingers touched the metal, my skin scoured red with a burn.

"Ouch!" I withdrew my hands, shaking it in the air. And when my eyes met here, she pushed a hard lump down her throat. "It's coated with Wolfsbane on the outside" She informed me and I gasped softly through my lips. Typical Blake, always pretending to be wiser than he actually was.

"Oh Elijah" Eliana looked to her son and then to me. "You shouldn't have brought him here. I don't want him to have to see me like this" Eliana said but Elijah moved even closer to her. Her body was scarred with open wounds and injuries and she was even bleeding from below her chest.

"What happened to you?" I asked.

"It's Blake. He stabbed me and took me from Elyndra. And when I opened my eyes, he told me he was trying to bring back Aurora from the dead and he also needed me. I don't understand..." She was shaking frantically and I reached for her hands this time.

"I know. I know but I came to get you out of here"

"Don't worry, Mummy" Elijah whispered, fighting back the tears in his eyes and he hugged her stomach again. I could tell she was in so much pain but she didn't pull away from him. Rather, she tried her best to embrace him, even though it was with just her elbows.

"Don't worry, Mummy. Daddy's going to save us" Elijah added and her eyes were filled with absolute horror. I could tell her heart dropped at that moment but there was barely any time to unpack. Because just then, the door creaked open again and I heard his footsteps.

"Well well well" Blake clapped his hands as he emerged into the room. I drew Elijah behind me but his eyes had already met his. "If it isn't my brother. You're awfully predictable by the way" Blake cooed and I scoffed.

"Wolfsbane? Really?"

"There's only so much that could harm a werewolf besides his own curiosity and his desire to always save anything" Blake replied and I shook my head. "If you know me, you know Eliana isn't just anything" I said.

"You shouldn't have come, you know that, right? Especially with a kid."

"An innocent kid by the way, you know I'm usually so conflicted with them around. You and I hold a certain sentiment when it comes to kids"

Blake added and I pushed a hard lump down my throat.

Well, he was right.

I knew Blake always wanted kids, he wouldn't stop blabbing about the perfect family when we were teenagers, when I knew him. But I wasn't sure if that Blake was still in there. I could never be.

After Aurora, he'd just lost his senses and ran mad from his grief. It was almost unbelievable what he was even doing here. With all the candles, and the spell books laying around. The wood and the herbs.

"I know what you're doing!" I blurted out. "It's pathetic, that even after all these years, you can't still bring yourself to forget her" I said.

"Denver" Eliana called and she was only begging for her life. But I'd kept the truth from Blake for so long, not anymore. "It's easy for you to say"

"It's easy for both of us!" I exclaimed and he chuckled. "You don't know what you're talking about" Blake replied. "You thought Aurora loved you, you think she does. She didn't love either of us and if you have been paying attention all this time to anything besides your grief, you would know that the Great Fire was no incident"

"You would know that the Witches were behind it and they killed our mother. Aurora killed our mother. She didn't give a damn about you or me or anything else!" I raised my voice and Blake bowed his head, the smile across his lips fading away.

"You're only saying that to get to me" Blake hissed and at that moment, something just shifted inside of me. Like I was standing face to face with grief itself. A century-old grief that had become of my older brother. Then, I cleared my throat and brought Elijah forward.

"He isn't just any kid" I whispered and one look back at Eliana, she already knew that I knew. Her eyes moistened with tears as I held his hands firmly. "He's my kid, Blake."

Even Blake was shocked that he couldn't even say anything for a while.

"Denver," I heard her voice echo from behind and the guilt that filled her wet eyes confirmed everything I already knew. I swallowed a hard lump down my throat, confronting the truth that night.

"He's my kid" I repeated.

"You always wanted kids, remember how you would never stop talking about starting your perfect family? You had it all planned out in your head. Do you remember, Blake? Because I do" I gritted through my teeth.

He shook her head. "No"

"We were just kids when we lost our mother. I mean she meant everything to us. She did everything for us, it was hard for me too. It was hard for all of us even Dad!" I added.

"This isn't just about Mother" Blake replied and I scoffed. "No, it isn't. Because grief comes and it blends all these emotions together. It comes and it messes with our heads, it's about everything. Grief made you into this person you are. It's not just about Mother, it's about everything that's happened since you walked out of the Pack all those years ago."

He pushed a hard lump down his throat as I inched closer to him.

"All because you couldn't accept the truth and I don't blame you. She got to us, she got to us badly and had us wrapped around her fingers. She bewitched us and took everything away from us" I continued when he growled beneath his voice.

"No, you took everything away from me!" Blake yelled angrily and there was a crack in his voice. "You took the crown, the Pack, you took Dad and you took Aurora" He muttered. At that moment the flames of the fire rose in the air as it was nearing the time.

Time for the sacrifice.

"All I had was Mum and you know how that ended but you, you were the one who took everything from me. Not Aurora" He said, his voice bridled with so much denial that it hurt.

"You left, Blake. That's what happened. You left us. You took your things and ran away when you found out she was gone and dead. It was all supposed to be yours but you left. What was Dad supposed to do?" I asked him and he chuckled, his arms stretched in the air.

"You know damn well it was never going to mine anyway. You were also Dad's favorite, he was always going to hand you the crown no questions asked" Blake said and I shook my head. "You don't know that."

"Except I do" He replied.

"You were in such a dark place, no one could pull you out. Not even me, you were grieving a woman who didn't even love you. Who didn't love either of us!" I said to him and he chuckled again.

"I know of the ring," He croaked in a deep tone. "I was there unbeknownst to either of you the day that she left. When she told you everything, and then all of that" he pointed when she said she loved you. That for you, it was real. I heard all that, Denver" Blake said.

"And you said it back. Didn't you?" He added. At that moment, I looked back at Eliana who stared into my eyes. "You looked me in the eyes and told me there was nothing between the two of you but that day, you told her you loved her. Didn't you, Denver?" He raised his voice.

And I darted my eyes back to him.

"You don't understand" I whispered, my eyes welling with tears. "I understand betrayal, Denver. I understand selfishness. You claim she bewitched the both of us but even after she came clean, you still said you loved her. What makes us any different then?" Blake asked.

"That was many years ago. I was a teenager, I didn't have any sense. I didn't even know what love was. You didn't even know what love was" I said. Blake twisted his lips. "I don't understand, if you know about the ring, then why are you still trying to save her?" I asked him.

"Resurrect her? I mean who's even going to do it?" I looked around. He picked up a book. "I've waited a century for this, there's not a couple spells I couldn't have learned over that time. I'll do it" Blake replied. "You took someone that I loved, so I'm going to take someone that you love too and Aurora and I can finally get a second chance while I watch your whole life crumble exactly like mine did all this time" He continued.

"You're doing this to hurt me?" I asked him.

"And then what's going to happen to Elijah, if you went ahead with the Sacrifice? He loses his mother and what's all people are familiar with that kind of loss, Blake. So what would that make you?" I asked him. And for a moment, he did pause. I could swear I saw a glimpse of humanity flash in his eyes at the thought of our mother.

That Blake I knew was still somewhere in there.

"I'm sorry," I said the words that I never in a million years thought I'd say to my brother but like I said, that conversation with Elijah, changed everything inside of me. Knowing I had a son brought out a part of me that I didn't know existed, just like Eliana.

"I'm sorry, Blake. There's not a lot of things I could say but that"

"It doesn't have to end this way, you lost a lot that day. I can only imagine how hard it was for you. I really wish you hadn't left. I really wish you stayed and we were able to work things out like how we used to. We were so close, Blake. I wish you and I didn't end up this way" I said.

And he lifted his eyes to me. I pushed a hard lump down my throat.

"I didn't love Aurora, the truth was neither of us even knew what love was a century ago. It was just an impure infatuation—" I threw a look back at Eliana too. "But now I know what love is" I whispered.

"And I know one day, you will find it too and you'll have that perfect family you always dreamed about. At least the Blake I knew back then, and I know he's still in there somewhere" Although I knew it was a long shot, I figured the best way was to get to him.

I really didn't want to have to fight him.

"I don't us to fight, not anymore. Rather, we can take down Elyndra together. You're the only one who can kill her, Blake. So help me" I said. "Please, help me brother" I stretched out my hands to him, a sort of peace agreement. And then he took it, with a faint smile.

My heart sank with relief as he made his way towards Eliana. She was still restive although I assured her everything was going to be okay. But nothing could have prepared me for what he did next.

Eliana suddenly gasped aloud and I turned to her. When Blake looked back at me, he had stuck a knife through her chest. "No!" Instinctively, I covered Elijah's eyes before falling to the ground. Blake twisted the knife.

And with a malicious grin, he muttered.

"The Sacrifice must happen."