

Chapter 226

Rûre

My eyes scan the many wolves, some were still human. Those who were, were mostly the younger ones who could not as yet shift into their wolves. They were safely on their parents backs, clutching the fur to keep upright as they neared.

I step forward, heart pummeling in my chest. Never had I seen so many wolves in one setting before. Not when the last time they heard of me was when I was their enemy. Now I was not. And that had my belly tighten in nervous knots, fearing the worst.

What if they do not accept me?

Never had I thought that pending question would have my entire mood shifting with unease.

"What is she doing here?" Sebastian growls when he notices me. He turns to Ares who was just an inch away from me. Ares sends him a warning growl. "Respect her Sebastian!" He snarls.

Sebastian folds his arms over his chest and glares at me before turning back to face Ares. "Why should I? Because she is your mate or because she is part wolf?"

His eyes then travel back to mine, a nasty scowl on his face. "Because all I see is a wicked witch who kills wolves for just the fun of it. She will never own my respect, queen or not."

Ares steps forward, ready to pounce on Sebastian but I reach out and stop him.

"Leave it be Ares. Everyone has their right to let out their own opinion." I said to the angered male. With my hand wrapped around his tense muscular arm he relaxes but stays glaring at Sebastian.

I turn to Sebastian and forced a smile that did not quite reach my eyes. "As for your question earlier, this is my property last time I checked, is it not?"

When he does not answer, I scan his face. "As for respect. It goes both ways." I sighed when he still does not say anything. "I get that you hate me but for just a second will you stop making everything a problem?"

Sebastian does not utter a word but turns around and walks down the steps and into the yard to meet the other wolves only to get stopped by the barrier. He stumbles back, cursing as he looks at his fingers.

He turns to me and glares. "See Ares, how can she be trusted!"

"I put that up in case Mericel or one of her dark witches came here. It was not intended to hurt any wolf." I shout as I scan over the wolves.

Sebastian opens his mouth. "You liar-

"Enough!" Ares booms out, his voice scaring the little birds in their nests. Everyone quiets down. He takes a step forward and looks at his people.

"Why have you come here?" He asked.

His voice is not one of anger but of curiosity.

A dark wolf at the very back shifts. His cracking bones echo through the entire area. I nearly wince, knowing exactly how that felt. He comes forward until we could clearly see him but stays behind another dark wolf to not show off his nakedness.

He is an older man, probably in his late forties. It was still dark so I could not see much but only what the glow of the moon showed me. His lips work into a grin as he peered at Ares who stood beside me. I noted how his eyes never once stray to mine. I had an inkling they knew who I was. From my white hair, who would not?

"You are alive!" He laughed and I am startled when the wolves began to howl at the moon.

Ares, who was still so tense, relaxes considerably and smiles. I found a smile also growing on my face just by seeing him happy. I focus my attention back to the wolf.

"Aye I am, I had been trapped in an enchanted forest." He spoke and walks down the steps. I contemplated whether to follow him or not but settled to stay rooted there. It was too early to act like nothing happened. They would not easily forgive me.

"Thank the moongoddess that you escaped then." The man says with relief in his tone.

Ares stops on the last step.

"Does my uncle know that all of you are here?" I heard the edge in his voice, the anger that lurked like a warning of a promising battle.

I looked at the wolves again, there were so many that I was sure it was the entire pack.

If I happen to move the barrier will they eat me for their dinner? I questioned inwardly. I was at war with my head and my heart, not entirely sure of what to do.

I decided that I will wait for Ares's instructions since he knew the wolves more than I.

"They do not look threatening." Ayla says with some doubt in her tone.

"Have you never heard the phrase 'keep your friends close and your enemies closer'? What if this is one of Mericel's ploys?" I asked her.

Instead of answering me she retreat back into my head.

"Zefer is no king of ours! He is not fit to rule us!" The man shouts and looks at the other wolves. I pull my attention back to him.

He turns back to Ares and spoke in a serious tone. "You are the rightful king of our people Ares. We will follow you-" Just then his dark eyes fall on me. "And anyone you wish to be by your side. We will follow no other man but you Ares! " The other wolves howl when the man finishes.

Then everything goes quiet. Like the calm before the storm. I furrow my brow and walk down the steps until I am beside Ares. The wolves looked at each other before the silence broke with a loud pained howl.

I gasp as I witness huge snakes emerging from the soil and attacking the wolves. They were even bigger than the wolves and that was saying something. Anger coursed through me. In the corner of my eye I noticed Sebastian storming my way. "Stop what you are doing to my people-

I turn to him and growl." Shut up." Ayla peaks out, angry that her people were getting injured and bitten by huge snakes. Sebastian freezes and I turn to the wolves who were fighting off the snakes.

Ares snarls, shifts into his massive wolf and charges towards the wolves. I spoke in tongues and let the barrier down, letting him pass through. "Get the children in the cabin now." I demanded Sebastian and Conner who was silent behind me until now.

Zefer may not have known the wolves were here but an evil hag did.

I was seething, anger radiating off of me as I witnessed children getting bitten. Crouching to the ground, I lay my palm flat on the earth, closed my eyes and began chanting.

The cries of the wolves made me lose focus one or two times but I managed and let my focus stay on the bloody snakes. One by one they hissed in pain as I lit them on fire, turning them to ashes.

I open my eyes and shout. "Get closer to the cabin, I am going to put up a barrier!"

Ares who heard me, quickly mindlinks the wolves. They all began to come rushing towards the cabin. Some limped, bleeding as they went, while others snarled, still wanting to fight.

When everyone was safely behind me, I started chanting. A barrier soon shields around the cabin, securing everyone inside. Still, more snakes appeared out of the earth, slithering towards us only to be stopped by the barrier.

A soft red gleam appears around us as the snakes tried to force their way inside the barrier I have put up, only to perish a second later into dust. Standing to my feet, I turn to Ares who stood protectively beside me, still in his wolf form.

"Mericel seems to be growing impatient. Instead of waiting for her to attack us, we should bring the war to her." I said with pure hatred in my voice as I heard the painful howls of the injured wolves behind me.