

The Silent Alpha
Chapter 67: Baggage

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****Zane****

"Are you fighting with me or staying out of this war?" Toran asks, a crippling fear grasping onto me.

My gaze shifts between my mate and mother, my heart unable to decide what to do. I can't bear the thought of leaving Talia and Kota alone knowing that her wolf will soon emerge for its first shift but I had already

lost my mother once and I don't have the strength to lose her again.

As I struggle to find my answer, Rionna replies for me.

"You will not drag my son into this," she declares, standing protectively in front of me.

"I am Ravenstone's Luna and it's me Sebastian wants. I'll go back. You just leave my son out of this."

Toran eyes my mother with an emotionless expression plastered on his face and he sighs tiredly as he formulates a response.

My mind, however, drifts off to the memories of my mother and father when I was a child.

My father aimed most of his anger towards me but my mother was never exempt from his abuse.

He would not hesitate to slap or hit her if she stood in the way of my punishment and she always did.

"Why did you stop?"

My father snarls, slowly unbuckling his belt from his waist. He rises to his feet, towering over me as I hold my book with trembling hands.

"I didn't say you could stop." I stare at the word "colonel" from the poem I am reading, tears springing to my eyes as I realize I

will inevitably stutter through it. I purse my lips and shake my head, preferring to take my punishment now rather than anger him more with my failure.

"Say it," my father commands as I hold my breath, close my eyes, and start to count.

1...2...3...4...

I hear his swift footsteps start to charge towards me, the sting of his belt rippling behind my thigh.

At once, the breath I've been holding is released with a scream as I receive a second lick to the back of my knees.

"Dadd-"

"I told you to speak!"

My father roars, raising his hand above his head to hit me again.

"Sebastian, stop it!"

My mother begs, tugging at his shirt in a weak attempt to get him to stop whipping me.

"Stop it! Stop it, don't hurt my baby!"

She beats her fists against his shoulders to make him stop and he shoves her away from him absent-mindedly to hit me again.

When she doesn't stop attacking him, he turns against her, pinning her to the ground with his large thighs and grabbing at her belt, my mother begging for him to let her go. She calls to his wolf but it seems my father is in complete control, beating her over and over again until he draws blood. Horrified, I pick up the book again and search for my place through my tears. "Col-co- colo-" I stammer through hiccups as my father snarls at me. "Say it right and I'll stop," he challenges me, my legs shaking so severely, I have to kneel to keep from falling over. "I-It's okay, Zane," my mother wheezes. "You can-" "Shut up!" My father roars, grabbing my mother by the throat before turning to me. "You better speak up, boy or I'll hurt her. It was the longest day of my life that day, my mother taking the blows without ever getting angry with me. Even as I failed over and over again, she did not scream at me, nor did she ever blame me for her hospital visit that day. I cannot let my mother face that monster again. "N-no..." I protest, shaking my head at my mother and pushing her aside. "N-no...y-you can't go." "Zane, it's my pack-" "M-my father will ki-kill you if he finds ou-out you married T-Toran," I insist, my eyes pleading with her to listen. "H-he can't hanging open in shock. "I-I-I go in y-your place. I-I don't want him to h-hurt y-you again." Tears fill Rionna's eyes and she holds her head in her hands, cursing herself for being unable to remember her life with my father. It does not matter to me, however. I remember...and I do not want my father to ever touch her again. Talia squeezes my hands tightly and I feel the slight tremor in her touch but she does not utter a word as I beg to take my mother's place in this war. She hides her face in Kota's hair and I sense the deep fear in her fast beating heart. "Ta-Talia..." She gives my hand another squeeze and shakes her head. "It's okay..." She whispers, doing her best to remain calm in Kota's presence. "It's okay. Kota and I are going to be okay, so you don't have to worry about us," she says through a forced smile. "We'll be fine." Talia puts on a brave face and looks me in the eye, leaning forward to kiss my cheek. "I love you," she murmurs. "Just come back to me in one piece." So many unsaid words hang in the air but we do not get the chance to exchange them as Toran reminds us of the severity of the situation.

"We'll meet you at the cars in one hour,"

Toran says as he Sebastian launches his attack and we need to prepare for what he might have up his sleeve."

Toran's usually calm face falters slightly, softening as he looks up at my mother.

"Ri..."

She, however, ignores him entirely, turning on her heel to storm out.

Toran can only watch in distress as my mothers slams the door behind her, and his thoughts slowly trickle into my mind.

"I'm sorry, my love," he thinks to himself before the man of stone returns, his face neutral and stoic once more.

"One hour," he mutters aloud before walking out with Tylan at his heels.

Kota yawns tiredly, Talia smoothing back his hair and kissing his forehead.

"Hi Evan," he whispers as he lays his head on Talia's shoulder and waves "Hey squirt," Evan grins, ruffling up Kota's hair.

"Zane, Talia," Queen Aurora sighs.

"I'm afraid Oliver and I will be leaving in a few hours as well." My heart sinks to the pit of my stomach.

Who will protect my family while I am away?

"I've been summoned to France to deal with Alpha Jacque and Benoit," the Queen explains.

"Unfortunately, I can't send a representative. But don't worry. I'll try to be back as soon as I can."

"W-Who will pro-protect my family?" I ask. we are away,"

Oliver explains.

"Evan will be traveling with us. Evan audibly groans but stops when Oliver gives him a stern look. My heart begins to beat a little

faster and I question if I am making the right decision to leave my family here while I fight.

"Don't worry Zane. Talia, Kota, Rionna, and Agnes will be safe,"

Aurora continues.

"My twin, Celina, will be taking charge of the kingdom from the LLuvia Blanca Pack for the time being so they are in good

hands," she smiles kindly at my mate.

"There shouldn't be any problems."

"It's okay," Talia tries to reassure me.

"I'm not as weak as I look," she says with a forced laugh.

"We're surrounded by wolves. We'll be perfectly safe."

My uneasiness does not fade away with her words but I also cannot let my mother face my father now that she has built a new life in Ravenstone.

"Come on, I'll help you pack,"

Talia murmurs, interlocking our hands and pulling me towards the door.

She's a little too eager to get rid of us, Grayson sulks, a part of him wishing Talia would get on her knees and beg us to stay.

She, however, keeps her head held high as she walks me out of the office, her face resting in a neutral state.

I lower my walls to listen in on her thoughts, hearing her count each step she takes in "Left, right, left, right, left"

She chants, keeping a strong smile on her cheeks.

When we reach the house, Agnes is sitting at the dining table with Rionna, pouring a cup of tea for her.

Tylen is also there, standing just beside Rionna with an envelope in his hand.

The three of them seem to be caught in a conversation all on their own so we walk past them up the stairs to our bedroom.

Talia sets Kota down on the bed while she searches for my bag and she begins searching for my clothes.

"Mommy, can I help?" Kota asks as Talia folds some t-shirts and shorts for me.

"Sure sweetie," Talia chirps with a little too much enthusiasm.

"Bring me some of Zane's socks from the dresser," she says, pointing to the dresser on the far side of the room.

Kota skips over and brings Talia two pairs of my socks which she carefully folds and stuffs into my bag.

"T-Talia..." She ignores me, humming quietly to herself as she works.

"T-Talia..." I repeat, Talia's eyes scanning the room for things to pack.

"You'll need your toothbrush and razor," Talia gasps, rushing off to the bathroom.

She returns a few moments later with my toiletries and waves a bottle of sunscreen in my face.

"Do not forget to put this on. It's hot and you're pale-"

A stunned look washes over her face and tears gather in her eyes.

Neither one of us makes a sound as it becomes evidently clear Talia is just trying to cope. I can't seem to find the right 4 words to

soothe her fears, the uncertainty of this war clouding my every thought.

"Y-you forgot m-my hair gel," I whisper quietly, Talia nodding her head and running back to the bathroom to get it.

"Daddy, where are you going?" Kota suddenly asks, climbing on the bed to play with the zipper of my bag.

"Daddy is going on a little trip,"

Talia answers for me as she returns with the jar of hair gel in her hand.

Her eyes and nose are a little red but she nonetheless forces a smile on her face and tucks the gel into the bag.

"To where?" Kota asks, turning to me.

"Can I go with you, Daddy?"

Talia pulls Kota onto her lap and kisses his forehead.

"Daddy is going to fight some bad guys," Talia explains.

"So he can't take you." Kota's eyes widen like saucers.

"Like a superhero?" he gasps.

"Yes, just like a superhero," Talia nods, my cheeks flushing as she turns to look at me.

"Daddy is our superhero."

"Woah!" Kota cries, jumping to his feet and bouncing on the bed.

"Mommy, when I grow up, I want to be a superhero like Daddy!" happily.

My heart fills with a joy I never thought I would feel but the very real fears and worries of war linger in the back of my mind. I have

to come back for him and Talia.

"Daddy, can I come with you?" Kota begs with a dangerously adorable pout.

I get down on my knees and pull him towards the edge of the bed, my voice very stern as I ask him for a favor.

"I-I need y-you to take care of Mo-Mommy while I-I'm away," I explain to him as I shake my head.

"C-can y-you do that for me?"

At first Kota nods but then his face grows very serious.

"But who takes care of Daddy?"

It's a question neither Talia and I can respond to and an uncomfortable silence fills the room.

When neither one of us answers, Kota climbs off the bed and runs away, his loud stomps echoing down the hall as he sprints to his room.

He returns a few moments later holding his little wolf.

"You can take Wolfie," he says, unzipping my bag and stuffing the small wolf inside.

"He'll protect you." I stare at the small pup who grins cheekily at me, wondering what on earth I did to ever deserve him.

Talia also gets up and fishes for something in her purse before returning to the bed and opening my bag.

She gently places a dream catcher with silver

"To keep your nightmares away while you're gone," She murmurs, tucking some hair behind her ear.

She knows about my nightmares? She clears her throat and climbs out of bed, coaxing Kota into her arms.

"We should get going," Talia sighs, lifting Kota and setting him on her hip.

"You still need to speak with Agnes before you leave." I rise to my feet and sling the bag over my shoulder, rushing to the door to block her way.

"What are you-" I crash my lips against hers, knowing she needs this kiss as much as I need her.

Kota giggles hysterically but I do not pull away, wanting to savor this moment of peace between his mother and I.

Talia moves her lips slowly against mine in response but pulls away to look at me with tears in her eyes.

"Let's go," she whispers, walking around me and opening the door.

I do not know what else to do so I follow her out and head downstairs where Agnes and Rionna are still discussing something,

Tylen long gone.

They stop talking when we approach, Agnes running to me with a look of anguish.

"Please," is all she signs but I only reply with a kiss to her forehead. cheeks.

Kota reaches over to her from his mothers arms and wipes at Agnes's wet cheeks.

"Don't cry Egg-ness," he coos.

"Daddy will come back."

Agnes only leans into his touch, not understanding his words.

Beside her, Rionna weeps silently and I give her a hug to reassure her everything will be fine.

Tylen knocks at the door and enters with a suitcase of his own, his face neutral as he announces that the car is ready.

I kiss my son and my mothers goodbye, Talia fighting hard to hold back her tears. I lean in to kiss her goodbye but she only pulls away.

"T-Talia-* "Marry me," she blurts out, my entire world standing still.

The Novel will be updated daily. Come back and continue reading tomorrow, everyone!

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