

Chapter 57

Maxim fell beside me, shaking the bed with both our bodies dripping with sweat.

This was the best night of my life. The absolute best.

While everyone enjoyed the barbecue, Maxim and I spent the night round after round of endless lovemaking, different positions and paces each time. I thought that maybe I'd be exhausted and pass out by now. But I felt like I was just getting started, and by the look on Maxim's face, he was too.

I beamed at him as I enjoyed the few seconds when my body wasn't burning up. I traced circles on his glistening chest as I stared into his sparkling eyes.

"That was..."

"Amazing," he said, taking the thought right from my head. Literally.

I smiled even wider. "Aren't you tired?"

Instead of answering, he climbed on top of me again and dipped his nose in my neck. He had been doing that a lot since my heat started.

My heat in itself was awful. My entire body burnt like it was literally on fire, and my belly throbbed in pain at the build-up of my hormones. I was horny before the moon even came up, and when it did, well, let's just say I was a walking dripping mess.

The only thing that soothes the burn is Maxim's touch. It was like a sizzling sensation that made me even hornier each time he was near, let alone touch me. And when he kissed me, gosh, it was heaven. I've always enjoyed his kisses, but tonight, they were so much better.

"You smell so... fucking...good," he growled in the based on my neck. He was obsessed with my scent tonight. I knew that a she-wolf's scent on her heat is irresistible to all unmated wolves and especially irresistible to her mate. And from what I could tell, Maxim was all over my scent.

I could feel him getting hard against my thigh again as my heat returned. Each time I had an orgasm, the heat would leave for a while and then come back in full folds.

I whimpered as I wrapped my feet around Maxim's back, locking him in my hold as I rubbed myself against him. He groaned in approval, getting much harder than he was before. I beamed.

I was sore indeed, but I couldn't help but want him over and over again. And it was the only thing that soothed me too.

His lips found mine in a heated kiss. He moved his lips so roughly against mine as he slowly slid himself inside my already throbbing core. I gasped in the kiss as he filled me, and my legs tightened around his waist as he moved in and out slowly before picking up pace.

Burying my hands in his hair, I matched each of his thrusts as a fresh build-up pooled in my stomach. I moaned in the kiss, gripping the sheets as he jerked faster-harder until I wanted to scream in pleasure.

He pushed me to the edge with each gentle stroke against my sensitive spot until I had no choice but to surge to my familiar place of euphoria.

But just as I was about to ride my fifth climax for the night, he stopped, suddenly growing tense. I snapped my eyes open, wondering why he did such a horrid thing until I saw the

look on his face.

He was scared, shocked, and distracted at the same time. At first, I thought it was another breach at the border. The last time the dragons attacked was on barbecue night, and that was because border patrol was fewer. It would only make sense that they did again, but I thought that Toya's thing would've worked a bit longer.

I sat up against the bedhead as I tried to get his attention. As my mind cleared, I could feel his emotions flooding through our bond like a flood.

I instantly grew alert, too, to the point where my heat felt bearable.

"Maxim, what happened?" I asked eagerly.

"Did you hear that?" he asked quietly, almost in a whisper.

I shook my head. I could only hear the distant music coming from the packhouse.

"I didn't hear anything."

"That howl," he mumbled, eagerly getting up from the bed. "That's Lukas. He's in trouble."

I followed behind him desperately and confused. "Lukas left hours ago, Maxim. He could be miles away. There's no way you could've heard him if he was out of pack borders, and I know he is because I can't sense his mind link anymore."

He shook his head as he draped a robe around his body, and I did the same too. "I know it sounds crazy, Melissa, but I heard him." He faced me with desperate eyes, and with everything he was feeling and the look on his face, and knew he was right. I could just feel it.

My own doubt ebbed, and worry replaced it.

"What... What did his howl sound like?" I asked in fear, stumbling down the stairs behind him. He stopped abruptly and swerved to face me, eyes wide in fear.

"Like he was dying."

I gulped. A good thing about having a mate bond was that we could feel literally everything the other felt. And at present, I had never felt such fear from Maxim. In fact, I had never felt him being afraid at all, except for the time when I was sick. But that was more of determination to get me better instead of fear.

I wanted to cry, but the tears burnt from my sizzling skin as they fell.

What happened to Lukas? How will he find him? What if... what if it's too late?

I shook the negative thoughts from my head as we busted through the front door. The cold air of midnight instantly soothed the burn in my skin a little. Bright headlights flashed across my eyes as Fiona, and a wolf, who I assumed was Leonardo in his shifted form, emerged in front of us.

Fiona stumbled from the car with worry etched on her face as she dashed towards me as fast as her rounded stomach could take her.

As she came closer, I noticed that she was crying. "Leo... Leo kept babbling that he heard a howl, and I didn't know what to do, and I'm scared." She grabbed me and sobbed into my shoulder. I buried my face in her hair, trying hard to make sense out of this all.

Leonardo heard it too?

"But... how?" I asked. Leonardo was staring at Maxim. I could tell they were speaking through their mind link.

Fiona wiped her eyes as he met mine again. "I don't know, but when they were younger, Alpha Alexander had them trained to hear a specific pitch in a howl for months. They all lost their voices for like a week and suffered migraines from trying to hear and produce that pitch. I guess it was like a cry for help, so wherever they were, they would be able to hear it."

"Oh my gosh," I mumbled. "So Lukas really is in trouble."

She nodded. "I think it's more than trouble, Melissa," she cried. "As a pregnant wolf, my instincts are much sharper. And I think... I feel like something terrible has happened. Mel. I can't... I can't bear it."

She grabbed her stomach as he cried even harder. With all the feelings, I felt my heat subsiding and my normal emotions coming back in full swing. The same feeling I had earlier today that something was going to go wrong returned. My tummy throbbed, but not with the build-up of an orgasm but something else.

"Leo and I are going to go look for him," Maxim announced as he approached us. Leonardo rubbed his nozzle against Fiona's arm in a gesture to try and comfort her.

"I'll come," I said. "I can run just as fast, and I want to."

He shook his head. "You have to stay here with Fiona." He was right. I knew he was. But I hated the thought of staying here, waiting. "And you're still in your heat. The minute you start running, your scent will be in the wind, and men will start following you. And putting your wolf in control might not be the best tonight."

He cupped my cheeks and gently kissed my lips. "I'll be back before you know it, okay? I love you."

I nodded, deciding that he was right. "I love you too. Please bring him home."

The tears flowed freely now as I watched him shift, and in a second, he and Leo were gone.

Fiona and I stayed in the living room, curled up on the couch silently. We couldn't speak. The anticipation of what might happen filled the air too much. Fiona was lost in her own world, and so was I.

Hours passed until the sun peeked through the windows as dawn emerged. We waited and waited to feel when the men returned within pack borders. But the longer they took, the more worried we became.

Soon, we huddled against each other, still quiet but offering whatever comfort we could muster. Eventually, I called Alexander and Natoya. I only thought it was appropriate to know that their son might be in danger.

Within a few minutes, they were at the Alpha house. I didn't expect them to come, but now it was the four of us sitting in silence, waiting.

Alas, I felt as my link clicked with Maxim and Leonardo, telling us they were within pack borders again. Everyone else felt it, too, because we were all at the door in a whiff. However, they blocked our mind links, so we couldn't ask them anything.

But what scared me the most was that I couldn't feel a connection with Lukas. I tried to tell myself that they didn't find him—that he was somewhere out there, but they had to return home for a bigger team to help search. But I knew too well what happened. Why else would Maxim block his link from me? Why else would he close out communication in our minds?

And from the looks of it, Leonardo did the same with Fiona.

I started crying before they even arrived. Everyone else stared at the trees, waiting for them to emerge, but I stayed still with silent tears streaming down my face.

When we saw them coming, I knew what had happened. Fiona's screams got lost in the air as Alexander held Natoya and Fiona from falling. Their cries and wails were deaf to me as I saw not three but two wolves trotting through the yard, with a motionless, naked Lukas lying on my mate's back.

Slowly and gently, Maxim lowered himself to the ground, allowing his brother to slide onto the bricked floor. I stumbled down the steps with my senses dead to the universe. I couldn't quite wrap my mind around what I saw.

From the corner of my eyes, Leonardo laid on his side, making soft, sad howls. I stopped a few feet away from Lukas, still unable to wrap my mind around it. But it was when I met Maxim's beady, amber wolf eyes and saw the immense hurt, heartbreak and grief that it finally became clear to me.

Natoya and Fiona's cries became loud again. Leonardo's hurtful howls blended in, and my eyes were finally opened.

Lukas was dead. He was lying down in front of us... dead.

My knees went weak as I plummeted to the ground beside him, as the first sob heaved from my chest. Soon, my own cries got lost in the cries of the others too, and no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't take my eyes away from his cold, lifeless body.

Lukas was gone. He was gone, and there's nothing we could do about it.



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