

## Chapter 6

-Vera-

As I'm walking back to the pack house, I stop at the edge of the forest on instinct. It's always difficult for me to leave this place. I turn around to face the trees, which almost seem to be reaching out to me. As strange as it might sound, this is the one place where I've never felt alone. Even as a child, I thought about running away to the forest countless times. If not for Sofia and her family, I probably would have.

I climb up the stairs that lead to Sofia's office. This is where she spends most of her time. I knock, and it's Alex who lets me in. As expected, the soon to be mom is very unceremoniously spread out on the couch, taking her post breakfast nap, belly up.

Alex beckons me to sit on one of the chairs facing the chimney, for which I'm grateful, I still feel cold from my vision. He sits in the chair next to mine.

"She's getting closer to her due date." He muses while looking at the vivid flame. I just turn to him, expecting him to continue. "I don't know how we're going to do this, Vera. After her father passed away, she gracefully took on the role of interim Alpha, I agreed because I expected it to be just that, an interim position, and look at us now." He turns to look at me with sad eyes. "She barely sleeps as it is, she's always exhausted, and with two kids?"

I understand his worry. Being a pack's Alpha isn't only about bossing people around and making executive decisions.

If there is a battle, the Alpha is part of the first line of defense. If there is an attack intended to weaken a pack, the Alpha is the first target. Alex is a strong wolf, but there is only so much he could do to defend her if we were attacked. A knot forms in my throat.

"You're right to be concerned, Alex," The flame breaks another piece of wood as I speak. "Ever since yesterday, I've been feeling uneasy, you guys know that. But today..." Alex doesn't fully know the extent of my abilities, only that my instincts are never wrong. "Something is coming Alex. Something we are not prepared for." He gives me a long look, but before he can press me for information, we feel Sofia rise.

"Alex, baby, leave me with Vera for a few, please?" He does as he's told but not before giving me a pained look. I can tell all of this is weighing heavily on him. Sofia goes to sit at her desk. I join her, sitting across from her. Her desk is large and bulky, fully made of wood, and goes back generations. Its bulkiness makes her look smaller than she is.

My best friend is one of the most beautiful women I've ever met. She has straight, light brown hair cascading to her lower back and honey gold eyes. Her slender figure makes her appear younger and fragile, but she is one of the fiercest warriors in our entire pack. What she lacks in brute strength, she makes up for in agility, speed, and intelligence. It's because of this that there were no objections when her position as Alpha was made permanent. People in fact cheered that once again, someone in the Allen family was going to be our Alpha.

"If your vision was as bad as you look, I'm already concerned." She has on that neutral expression I recognize to mean business. I tell her everything I saw without sparing any details.

Once I'm done, there is a long silence as Sofia stares at the fire to her left. The floor to ceiling window behind her shows that it is once again beginning to rain.

"In your vision, was the creature on lycan territory?" I'm not sure where she's going with this but I nod. I never saw it cross into our land. She continues, "it's after the lycans, Vera. Eric told me once they started running deeper into wolf territory, it stopped chasing them." There's a pause as she's weighing her next words carefully. "This smells like magic, V. Very strong and dark magic. Whoever was directing the creature, was directing it to kill the lycans but not our wolves..."

"We have to send them back." I speak before she can even continue, but I can't help myself, I know what I saw, what that thing can do. She scoffs sarcastically,

"You want me to send your mate to his death?" I am taken aback by the reminder of the nonsense that man said yesterday. "Have you even been to see him to confirm he's your mate?"

"Sofia, listen to yourself, he's a lycan!" I get up from my seat, exasperated that I even have to explain it. I begin pacing, I had completely forgotten about this tiny, crucial detail.

"I mean, if he's a literal beast in battle, can you imagine in-" I cut her off,

"The Moon Goddess forgive your filthy thoughts, Alpha." I glare at her.

"Oh come on, V. You speak of the Moon Goddess but she's the one who paired you with him! I don't even know how this works, you having a mate without hearing your wolf, but finding one's mate is a very rare blessing!"

I'm red. Not because I'm mad, but because I'm suddenly painfully aware that I saw this man naked yesterday. In fact, I saw all of them naked. They didn't even have time to put on some clothes after shifting to their human form. I place my red face on my hands, collapsing on the chair once again and Sofia chuckles. I have forgotten all about the very serious topic we were discussing just a few moments ago.