

Chapter 69

From Bad To Worse

Lauren

I sigh as I look at the papers on my desk. I was tired and a bit stressed. I have been having a difficult time sleeping since Bash and I came back. For some reason I've been having nightmares.

My eyes kept dropping on their own accord and no matter how much coffee I drank I just couldn't seem to keep the sleep away.

"You know you don't have to work while tired" Hunter's voice makes me snap my eyes open. "I can take you home, after all you're the boss."

Hunter had been reinstated as my bodyguard. Given the attack on the cabin last, I knew I needed one.

I couldn't risk being in danger despite having Blue and Midnight.

I haven't completely forgiven Hunter, but I was getting there. It doesn't hurt that he has moped and groveled since Bash put him in charge of my security. I agreed because I figured it was better the devil you knew than the angel you didn't.

“I know but I have to finish this. Beside, someone has to be here since Claire took her leave.” I respond

Claire and I decided that she would take her leave due to her pregnancy. She had fainted on Monday.

Her doctor said that it was due to stress and if she continued on like that, there was a chance she could lose the baby.

She took over the running of the company when I ran away. I figured I could do the same. She was now under complete bed rest for the entire of her pregnancy.

I pick my phone and call Sheryl. She answers on the first ring.

“Yes ma’am?”

“Could you please get me another cup of coffee?” I asked her.

“Sure thing. Give me five minutes and I’ll be in there with it.”

I hang up the phone and continue looking at the papers scattered on my desk.

“What are you working on anyway? Is it another design?” Hunter interrupts me again.

This time I groan in annoyance. “No. I’m just going through the finances.”

Accounting wasn't my best stronghold. I was having a hard time piecing the numbers together. Some made sense and others didn't.

"I can help you." He says, making me look up. "I majored in accounts back when I was in college."

I look at him in surprise. Of all the things I didn't expect that from him. It may be judgmental of me but he just didn't seem like the type that went to school. And even if he did, he looked like one of those who wasted time in college with football, parties and girls.

"You look shocked." he chuckles.

I shake my head. Trying to wrap my head around that simple fact.

"I am shocked. You look like the Uni jocks that weren't really interested in school and picked the easiest classes so that they didn't have to put effort in their studies."

Instead of being offended, he laughs as if what I just said was the funniest thing.

"I could take a look if that's okay with you." he says after he stops laughing. I think about it before I accept his offer.

"Okay. Come on then, we have a lot of ground to cover."

He stands up and crosses the room before sitting on a chair near my desk. Once he is seated, I hand over the papers from the accounting office and focus on the ones from the design department.

The door to my office opens and Sheryl walks in with my coffee. She comes and places the cup on my desk.

“Thank you, Sheryl,” I mumble, taking a sip of the caffeinated nectar.

I notice she smiles brightly at Hunter before she leaves. Hunter grins. His eyes following her until she was out of the room.

“So, how are things between you and Sheryl?” I ask him, taking another sip of my coffee.

“Pretty well actually. She was honestly made for me,” he smiles but frowns a few seconds later.

“If things are good, why are you frowning then?”

“Because I still don’t know how to tell her that I am not entirely human,” he mumbles.

I hear the despair in his voice. I can’t imagine what he must be going through right now. He is clearly head over heels in love with Sheryl and I’m sure she feels the same. But he also can’t keep what he is a secret.

When they finally settle and get married, they will want to have kids. Their DNA will be split between their kids. There are those that will have more wolf DNA, which means they’ll be able to shift. Those who will get more human DNA won’t be able to shift but if they do get a werewolf mate, their children have wolf spirits.

Given the fifty percent chance of their kids being wolves he has to tell her the truth. It will be difficult to explain how their thirteen year old daughter or son suddenly turned into a wolf.

I pat his hand. “Don’t worry so much about it. Trust the goddess. She chose Sheryl as your mate because she knew you two are compatible. If she intertwined the both of you then it means that she knew Sheryl will accept you for who you are. Pray to the goddess and ask her to reveal the best time for you to tell her. When the time is right, you’ll know.” I tell him. Trying to ease his worries.

“Thanks Luna,” his sour face is replaced with a smile, which in turn makes me smile.

We became silent as we both focused on the job at hand.

“Luna,” Hunter calls me, after a while, making me look up.

“Yes?”

“Have you by any chance taken out a large amount of money from the company?” he pierces me with a look I can’t decipher.

My eyebrows pinch in confusion. “No, I haven’t.”

“What about Claire?”

“I don’t think so. We always make decisions together, especially concerning the company’s finances. Why?” I ask my heart racing.

“Because there’s money missing. Around five million or so.” He breathes out. “I’ll have to go through the reports thoroughly and comb through the past months since the discrepancies I’ve seen are from this month and the previous one.” he finishes.

“But that’s impossible. No one can touch that kind of amount without an approval from me or Claire, so how is it that it hasn’t been accounted for?” I snarl, gritting my teeth.

“I may be wrong but my guess is that someone is stealing from you.” he spat, his jaw clenched.

“Whoever did this knew what he or she was doing because they did it so well that it was almost impossible to detect.”

I lean back in my chair. Mouth wide open, jaw dropped and completely shocked. Who would want to steal from us? We’ve always treated our employees fairly and paid them well. We were even named among the best companies to work for in the city. So why would someone steal?

“Is there a way for us to find out who it is?”

My sadness was quickly turning to anger. I felt my claws extending, as my temper started to rise.

“Yes. It’ll take a little bit of time but I’ll find who’s stealing,” he replies, the same anger as mine reflected in his eyes.

“I don’t care how long it takes as long as we catch this son of a bitch!” I yell, standing up from my chair.

I start pacing. Trying to cool down. The last thing I needed was losing control and shifting. That would just add to my problems.

‘Calm down Ren,’ Blue soothes. Finally, back in action.

“I am fucking calm!” I grit out.

I hated theft with a passion. If someone was in trouble they should’ve come to me or Claire instead of stealing.

I hear a phone vibrate. Mine was silent so I knew it was Hunter’s. I ignore it and continue taking deep breaths. In and out.

“Uh Luna? We’ve got another problem,” the anxiety in his voice makes me turn to look at him.

For some reason he was avoiding my eyes. What the hell was wrong now? I couldn’t handle any more bad news.

“What is it?” I ask in irritation.

“It seems that uh, umm...”

“Would you spit it out already Hunter.” I was losing patience and it showed by how tight my fist was closed.

“There are photos of you circulating the internet. They were posted an hour ago and they’ve already gone viral.” he says softly, looking everywhere but at me.

He looked stiff, his muscles tense and he was holding his phone tightly. If he wasn’t careful, he was going to break it.

Why would photos of me have him on edge? Since my messy separation with Darren, then the public finding out I was the CEO of Ruby’s Collection and then finally my wedding with the top shark of the city. Hundreds of my photos were now on the internet.

I round my desk and pick my phone. I find missed calls from Sebastian, Claire and Lilly. I ignore them and search for the trending pictures.

“I don’t think you should look at them.” Hunter suggests but it was already too late.

I gasp when picture after picture of me naked with different men pop up on my screen. The date on them suggested that they were taken recently.

I scroll down to find an article attached to them. The title read; ‘LAUREN ASHFORD CHEATS ON HER BILLIONAIRE MOGUL ASHFORD MERE MONTHS AFTER THEIR LAVISH EXCLUSIVE WEDDING’ Below the headlines is a photo of me and Bash on our wedding day.

I don't notice my phone crashing to the floor. The only thing that registered was the tightness in my chest. The panic attack taking over. I couldn't breathe or even form a thought.

Fuck! Sebastian was going to kill me. The one thing we agreed on was no cheating and here are photos of me with other men plastered on the internet.

Oh goddess, this day just went from bad to worse in just minutes.