

Chapter 88

Her Pain

Sebastian helps and leads me downstairs. I was nervous and curious at the same time. I didn't know what to expect or how to even react.

It has been a rollercoaster of emotions since I got here. I am still reeling from all that I have found out about my and Claire's background and also from my own aunt trying to kill me.

Despite everything that has happened there is now no doubt that Claire is John's and Olivia's daughter.

Claire will probably ask for a paternity test, but from everything Valery confessed, I was sure that the results would be positive.

We get down stairs and everyone turns to look at us. Both sets of grandparents are present and so are Lilly and Luke. Hailey and Lucas sit on the opposite side of each other. Also present was Micah. He probably got here when I was still unconscious.

The moment she notices me, Lilly stands up and comes to me. Her eyes swimming in tears. She hugs me and cries on my shoulder.

“I’m really sorry Ren...I didn’t know, I had no clue that she wanted you dead” she sobs. “I brought you here so that we could have fun without knowing that I had played right into her plans.”

I feel her heartbreak. She was devastated, but who wouldn’t be when they find out their mother was a killer?

“It’s okay Lilly, I don’t blame you,” I soothe her softly. “None of this is your fault. It’s all on her not you.”

She calms down a little but doesn’t stop crying. Micah comes and gently pulls her from me. He whispers comforting words before leading back to the seat.

“You ready for this?” Bash whispers through the bond.

I take a deep breath. “As ready as I’ll ever be.”

“If it gets too much let me know and we’ll leave, okay?” he asks.

“Yeah.”

We cut off the link and take our seats. I face Hailey just as Benson speaks.

“We’ve waited long enough to hear what you have to say Hailey. I can’t believe you, we mourned you, cried over you for years and yet you were alive and you didn’t tell anyone. You let us suffer by believing that you were dead...How could you?” His voice was low and full of pain.

I didn't understand what they felt but I could only guess. I couldn't imagine believing that Krystal was dead only to find out more than twenty five years later that she wasn't.

Hailey takes a deep breath before beginning. "How could I have let anyone know when I knew the lengths Valery would go to just to get rid of me?"

"Being told that my mate was having an affair broke me. For months I struggled with that information. I was hurting and I just didn't understand how Lucas could do that to me. The maid, her name was Mary, she started giving me small pieces of information about how the woman looked, at first I didn't want to believe it but when I confided in Valery and she admitted she was the other woman I was destroyed."

"I never cheated on you, never looked at another woman, let alone your sister." Lucas growled.

"True, but you still slept with her, Luke and Lilly are proof of that." she retorted, throwing daggers at him.

"Don't get me wrong I love Luke and Lilly but I was really hammered when they were both conceived." he yelled throwing his hands up in their air.

I don't know about you but I would rather not listen to them arguing about his sex life and how my siblings came to be.

"So I wasn't a love child?" Lilly asks brokenly.

I feel bad for her and Luke. Knowing that you're a result of a drunken mistake.

"Can you two stop it!" Kristine all but yells.

Hailey sighs then continues, "Anyway, at that time I didn't know that you never cheated on me. Valery was my sister and she had never given any inclination that she detested me so I had no reason not to believe she had ulterior motives. When she broke the news I didn't have time to dwell on it because I went into labor."

"During the entire labor all I thought about was what Valery told me and I hated you. Hated that you were pretending to be the caring mate when you were sleeping with my sister behind my back and you were planning to leave me and break the bond. I made the decision that I would file for a separation once I was out of the hospital. I couldn't stand the thought of staying with a man that was unfaithful." she says looking at Lucas.

Lucas interrupts her. "That's why you didn't want me in the labor room with you? If it wasn't for me insisting they would have thrown me out." he says brokenly.

I watch them. Study them. The pain was still there from all those years ago. It's hard to accept all the damage that Valery did in a quest to get a man that wasn't hers.

"Yes. I felt that you were a hypocrite...when you left I kept falling in and out of consciousness from the fatigue and stressful labor. I don't know how long it was after you left but a doctor came to my room. He

injected me with something. At first, I thought it was protocol but her next words made me realize that it wasn't."

"I will never forget what she said, I watched with half closed eyes as she shook her head and said it was really sad that my sister wanted me dead, that she would go to such lengths to have me killed. I was scared because I realized she must have poisoned me on orders from Valery. I tried speaking up but I couldn't. I was already feeling woozy and sluggish. The doctor left and I fell into darkness. The last thing on my mind was my baby girl."

"The goddess had other plans though and she spared me. I was shocked when I woke up in the morgue. I scared the morgue attendant half to death when I opened my eyes while he was cleaning my body. Preparing it for cremation."

"So you don't remember a thing between that time frame? Lucas was told that you bled to death." Her mother, Rose asked. Her voice full of emotion.

"No, the last thing I remember is seeing the doctor walking out. The attendant wanted to call a doctor to check on me but I begged him not to, I couldn't risk it. I was afraid and I knew that if Valery found out I wasn't dead then she'd be after me till I was. I explained everything to him and he decided to help. He would fake my death and since I was supposed to be cremated, nobody would ever find out that I wasn't dead."

"Whatever Valery had the doctor inject me with had adverse effects. It left me paralyzed. I couldn't move or do anything except talk and move

my eyes. I wanted to see my baby girl, gosh did I want to, but I didn't know if Valery's hate would be transferred to her. I was afraid that if she knew I was alive or anyone for that matter then it would put my baby in danger."

"I also knew that no one would have believed me if I said that Valery wasn't who everyone thought she was. I didn't have any proof so I waited and focused on getting better. I hoped that Lucas would take care of our baby despite everything. During that time I started doubting what Valery told me, I mean if it was true that she and Lucas were in love then she wouldn't have had me killed right?"

"A few months later I sent Peter, the mortician, to the pack. I wanted him to find Lucas and bring him to me. He came back alone and told me that Lucas wasn't worth it. He found out that Valery was pregnant with his child and they were in the process of planning a mating ceremony. That put my doubts to rest. It was clear to me that what Valery said was true. I was livid, I mean it hadn't even been three months since I was pronounced dead and here they were happily planning to spend the rest of their lives together. I felt betrayed. I was bitter and angry and in pain. My heart broke knowing that Lucas hadn't loved me like he claimed."

"This Peter should have informed you that Lucas was broken not only by your death but by what happened with Valery. He lived with guilt cause he felt he had betrayed you." Jack mutters.

"Do you honestly think that any member of the pack would have told an outsider that piece of information? The only news circulating was that he was expecting another child and taking another mate. Peter told me that my baby was doing well, I also found out from him that she was named

Freya. My heart was at ease so I focused on getting better but then things went wrong when she went missing.”

“Everyone thought that she was taken by an enemy but I knew Valery was responsible. I almost died from grief. I knew that there was no way Freya was alive, just like me, Valery had managed to get to her. I blamed myself because I felt like I could have done something, I could have sent Peter to take her. She would have been safer with me. Instead I trusted that Valery won’t harm her with Lucas around and for that Freya paid the price.” she says brokenly.

I see how lost in memory she is. How tortured she looked. It was heartbreaking and difficult to watch.

“The grief pushed my recovery back. I had nothing to live for and all I wanted was to die and follow her. Peter relocated us and kept pushing me. Almost two years after everything had happened I was still paralyzed and nowhere near recovering. I remember Peter yelling at, calling me pathetic for allowing Valery to win, for the first time I felt an emotion. Anger. I wanted my revenge for Freya and I was going to get it. I pushed aside everything and got back to healing. It took another year or so but I finally managed to walk without support and from there on things got better until I was fully healed.”

I stare at her and ask. “Why did it take you all these years to come back if you healed within those first few years?”

She gives me a small smile. “Because I didn’t have any proof. I couldn’t prove that she tried to kill me or that she killed my daughter. No one would have believed me without proof. I could have killed her or paid

someone to do it for me but I wanted to expose her. Let everyone see her true color. Too bad she never left any traces behind. Even if I had came back, Valery would have made my life hell. She wouldn't have stopped till she made sure that I was dead and I remained dead."

"But didn't you have a phone, I am sure you would have recognized Ren from gossip columns." Sebastian interrupts.

"I was paranoid that Valery would discover me or someone else so I only used burner phones and I kept to the ways we were taught in the pack. To stay away from modern technology. Peter who adapted my way of living also stayed away from them. He always kept tabs on the pack by visiting the area and getting information from trusted people. It was through him that I learned a woman who looks like an exact replica of me had come to the pack with Lucas' daughter. I snuck into the pack and saw you, Lauren, I just knew that you were my daughter."

"I was waiting for the perfect opportunity to get you alone, to tell you that I was alive. I would say it was a coincidence but I believe it's the moon goddess doing, I was in the right place at the right time."

"I was running through the forest on my way to the pack when I noticed the car crash. I saw Valery and her men who were dragging you into the car. I followed behind in wolf form till I got to their hideout. I had already taken out her men when I heard her confess to everything. It still comes as a shock that everything I believed was a lie. That I played right into her plan and lost twenty plus years."

Lucas looks at her. I know that what he is about to ask her is hard on him.

“Did you ever get mated again?” he asks in a low voice.

Hailey avoids his eyes when she answers. “Yes, about six years after everything happened. He was my neurologist. We were together for fifteen years before he died. I didn’t mate again.”

Lucas looks pained at her answer. He had hoped that she'd stayed single which is twisted in a way.

“Do you have other children?” I questioned her.

She shakes her head in sadness. “Unfortunately no...the poison I was injected with not only left me paralyzed but it also took my ability to have anymore children.”

I was reeling from all that Valery had done to Hailey. All that she had taken from her sister. My hate burned for her because I couldn’t understand how someone could be so heartless.

Luke stands up and walks towards Hailey. He shocks us when he falls on his knees before her and then places his head on her lap.

“I’m sorry. For everything my mother put you through, for the pain, for the shattered pieces and for everything she has stolen from you. I know sorry is just a word but it’s all I can give you. If there was a way to give you what you lost, I swear with everything I am I would.” he says silently crying. His heartbreak clear in his voice.

Hailey’s eyes fill with tears. She kisses his forehead before wiping his tears.

“This isn’t your fault Luke, and I would never blame you for the sins of your mother. You’re not her and you’ll never be.” she gives him a teary smile.

I see a bond form right there before my eyes and I jump for joy inside. This was how it was supposed to be and now Hailey and I or rather my mother and I can now finally have our justice.