

Fatal Temptation: Between Two Alphas

novel Chapter 13

JACE

“We’re losing him!” the doctor yells.

“Will he make it?” I ask.

“I don’t know,” Dr. Lee commences CPR as more medical equipment is wheeled in.

“What the hell is wrong with him?” I demand.

Ashley is across the room on another exam table. She’s near to death. Our best physicians are using paddles to shock her body. The defibrillator beep, beep, beeps as it charges. “Clear!” Dr. Lee yells.

It’s like a trauma scene from tv.

I have no love for my sister-in-law. I cannot prove it, but there have been a series of security breaches, and they all began shortly after she became Luna of our pack. Two of our off-shore accounts were emptied entirely last month. It isn’t just the missing money. We’re a publicly traded company. This kind of theft—hundreds of millions of dollars—will plummet stocks and have the IRS so far up our asses, it’ll be a miracle if someone doesn’t end up in jail for it.

“Mia,” my brother whimpers.

Everyone in the room freezes.

My father’s mouth hangs open. Sean, my father’s beta and Mia’s father, sucks in a breath.

We’ve wronged her.

Each of us in this room.

We are her family, and we stood idly by as Cam struck her and cast her out.

No one has spoken her name in years. But she's always been a part of us. In the traditions she created. Meals and gifts, house decorations and just our collective pasts.

She's family.

"Mia," Cam cries again.

"What is the meaning of this?" my father asks. His attention shifts to Ashley where she lies deathly still across the room.

Dr. Lee shakes his head. "She's in a coma. But there is something wrong with her blood." He peels off his gloves. "I'll have to run more tests."

"And my granddaughter?" my father asks.

We all turn to my niece where she rests in a crib. She doesn't cry or complain much and for an eighteen-month old baby, she is unable to heal as a healthy wolf her age would.

No one says it, but we all know...something isn't right.

Dr. Lee sighs. "We can safely assume that the malady of the mother has impacted the child."

Dad frowns. "But you can save Merilee, right, doctor? And my son?"

Dr. Lee makes no promises.

Cam starts to convulse and we crowd the bed to hold him down.

"Mia!" He thrashes.

"Bring the girl back," my father decrees.

No one moves. No one speaks.

In Cameron's decline, the alpha powers for our pack are reverting back to my father. It's not a good sign—maybe that's why my dad is willing to risk bringing Mia home, knowing it'll start a war with the Luna. If she wakes, that is. And, at this rate, I don't think anyone cares about old hurts or words spoken that shouldn't have been said. I don't think anyone really cares about Ashley.

Sean lays a hand on my father's shoulder. "My daughter is gone."

Yeah, and he's a piece of shit for not leaving with her. I'm sure plenty of wolves admired Sean for his absolute loyalty to the pack. Me...I don't think I can respect any man that could abandon his child like that.

Mia is a sister to me. And these motherfuckers may have been fine with banishing her all those years ago, but that decision never sat well with me.

They don't know where she is. But I do.

I tracked her, personally.

"Find her!" Father puts the force of his alpha blood behind the command. "Find her. And bring her back! Whatever it takes! Send our best trackers—"

I texted her plenty of times over the last few years. To see how she was doing. To ask if she needed anything. To let her know I was thinking about her.

That she wasn't forgotten.

Mia would acknowledge the texts with a 'thank you' but nothing more. Can't say I blame her. I'm ashamed of myself for not doing more, for not fighting harder to change Cam's decree.

"Stay on the line," Jacob tells me. "I'm pulling up an address from the phone records." His fingers tap on a keyboard. "It's a suburb in Silicon Valley. Looks like she's working for a tech company."

Huh. That's something.

My impression of Mia has always been of a kid sister, following us around and breaking balls. But she's grown and has a job and a whole life she's been living without us.

I mark the address in my GPS when Jacob's text comes through. "Jacob, we're heading to the airfield now. Do me a favor, triangulate the location of the phone itself. And dig up anything you can find on her. I want everything—any known acquaintances, friends, lovers."

"Gimme a few."

"Sure thing. We'll be in the air for an hour." I lower my voice. "Do you have any other information about our pack's security breach?"

A low whistle. "This isn't your run-of-the-mill corporate embezzlement. I'm tracking the money wires through multiple shell companies. Should I switch back to the money trail?" Jacob asks.

"No. Mia Riorsen. She is our number one priority."

"Copy that."

I switch off my phone and jog toward the idling SUV.

Christian drives us to the airstrip, and door to door, we're lifting off in under thirty minutes.

As the jet reaches altitude, I think through my plans. I have to consider that Mia won't come back. That she won't care about the people that abandoned her.

That this mission might get... messy.

I ask myself: just how far am I willing to go to save my family?