

Fatal Temptation: Between Two Alphas

novel Chapter 18

Chapter Eighteen

Corinne lunges across the table toward Jace.

“Stop!” I scream.

Miraculously everyone freezes.

Eric’s eyes are fluttering. His pack is communicating with him. “It’s wraiths.”

“What?” I don’t know what they are.

“A lesser breed of vampires. Think of a zombie...mindless, but strong and focused only on its next feed.”

“They’ve air-dropped in.” Then Eric curses: “Fuuuck!”

I’m not thinking, I rush to his side. “What?”

“Your boy Jace is right. Ashley’s pack... they’re aligned with the vampires. They’re staging an uprising.”

“Ravens!” Corinne hollers.

The warrior women shift into their lycan forms and race in a single file out of the hall.

Gunshots echo.

I can hear some of them ricocheting into the walls of the building.

Eric pulls me close and kisses me.

My former packmates growl viciously.

He draws back. His dark eyes trace over my injuries.

“Get her out of here!” he commands.

“What!?”

I’m like an old record, repeating the same question.

“You’re weak,” he explains, brushing my hair back. His eyes trace over my face as if memorizing my features. “I need to know that you're safe.” He glances over me to Jace. “Don’t worry, Mia. I know where to find you.”

It’s a threat.

“I’ll send my healer to Healmsworth lands.”

“We have our own,” Jace counters.

You can still hear me, right?

He projects the thought into my head.

I nod.

It pains me to admit this... but I think your fate is tied to Cameron’s. We have sources... They confirmed that he’s very ill.

Sources? Like spies?

Eric doesn’t answer. Chaos is descending around us. Maybe it’s because of the kids. Or ... were you mated to him?

I look away. It wasn’t reciprocated.

Eric looks fierce.

This is the most powerful alpha in the country. He would not want to be anyone’s second choice.

I have a past, Eric. I cannot erase it. And I have children—lest you forget.

He kisses me again. “Choices, Mia,” he says aloud. Then only to me. I don’t give a shit about your past. But I will be the only one in the present.

“I have to go,” he tells me. Then he stares at Jace. “Get her out of here. Keep her safe.”

“That was our objective before you brought her into this mess.”

Eric snarls.

“Go!” I tell him.

Trace your steps back toward our room. Two doors before the bedroom is the nursery. There is a tunnel leading out of the closet. Lift aside the carpet and you’ll see it beneath the floorboards.

Eric runs toward the main door. Wolves flank him.

He casts one last look at me. At my former packmates.

As Luna, she’d want to maintain control of the Healmsworth pack, and my kids would be a direct threat to that claim. And, if they prevailed here... if they managed to defeat Eric... then they would seize control of his entire Western pack, which meant my kids aren’t safe anywhere in this state, or even on this coast.

Think Mia. Think.

I don’t know where we would go. But we have to get away.

From all of this madness.

I hustle down the ladder. I can tell when I leave the ‘house’ and start below ground. The temperature drops as I descend. Counting each step as I go, I figure I’m forty feet or so beneath the ground. This tunnel is deep.

When my foot meets air, I shift until I can see the walls of what appears to be a mining tunnel. There are even remnants of a railway on the ground about a dozen feet below me.

I drop and shift until my arms are covered with fur and my face has elongated. My ears extend and tilt up. I can still hear the fighting. The earth above shakes with the force of the ammunition.

To the left, I hear water dripping and silence. To the right of the tunnel, a long, long way off I can smell fresh air. I turn right and start running.

“Wait!” Jace screams.

I want to shift fully but in wolf form, I’ll have no clothes and my primary focus is getting to my daughter and son. I can’t exactly head back into one of the poshest sections of Silicon Valley and trot down busy streets as a wolf.

Animal control will be all over me.

And so will every person with a cell phone and a social media feed.

I run faster.

The guys are behind me, gaining.

I have endurance, but they have numbers.

Up ahead I can see the end of the tunnel lightening. It’s night, but the sky is lighter than the absolute darkness of this mining cave.

More Nala! I call to my wolf.

Her added strength gives me speed.

If I can make it to the trees, I can outrun them on this terrain. Their bulk will slow them down.

But before I can breathe that first gulp of fresh air, I’m tackled hard and slammed to my knees.