

## Chapter 19 Money Matters

Liana POV

I am a nervous wreck by the time we stop at the hospital. Dad is about to have major surgery and I worry about him, and if that was not enough, Drew's words taunted and mocked me.

"I'll walk with you," Drew says as he parks the car.

"No, please don't," I say hastily. "When my mother sees you, she will have questions and I cannot deal with her today."

"I understand," he nods. "Good luck."

"Thank you, Drew," the words come from my heart. "I mean it, for everything, thank you."

"I'm here for you, okay?" He looks at me sympathetically and I lean over to hug him.

I bite back the tears as I get out of the car and walk to the entrance. Drew is a combination of a best friend and a father, and I adore him for that. Talking to him without judgement was a stress reliever and I am incredibly emotional right now.

"Liana," I hear my name and I gape in surprise at Nina that is coming my way.

"What on earth are you doing here?" I ask happily as I hug her.

"I'm your support, dummy," she smiles brightly as she hooks her arm around mine and together, we walk to my father's room. "Axel arranged with my boss for a day off. Isn't that considerate?"

"Wow, yeah," I say as I swallow the guilt. I have been nothing but rude to him today and he still does the sweetest thing. Having my best friend here is more than I could ever have hoped for.

"Axel is going to be a great alpha," Emma sighs dreamily. "I just hope he finds a mate that's worthy of him."

Her words make me uncomfortable, but I cannot show it. I have never thought about it, but what will happen to me if he finds his mate within these six months? He will not even look my way and kick me out.

"Liana," Mom walks to me as we enter the waiting room and hugs me. "You're really here."

"Hi Mom," I smile. "You look good."

"Thank you," she thrives under my compliment. "Your brother won five thousand dollars with the horses, and he treated me with a spa day."

"That's nice," I smile stily as uneasiness gnaws at me. Any sentence containing the words 'Leon' and 'horses' are bound to end in tragedy.

"Do you have cash?" Mom looks at me. "I want to buy a cup of coffee."

"Sure," I reach into my purse and take out my last few dollars and hand it over to her.

"Thanks, honey," she beams. "Now go see your father. He's been asking for you."

"She hasn't changed one bit," Nina snorts as Mom disappears down the hall.

"Yeah," I sigh as I enter Dad's room and leave Nina behind.

"Hi, Daddy," I say softly as I take a seat next to his bed.

"Princess, you ... came," his breathing is shallow, but his eyes are still bright and alive.

"How can I not?" my lip starts quivering as I take his fragile hand into mine. "You're my favorite person in the world."

"Liana," Dad looks at me seriously. "Thank you ... for ... making ... this ... operation ... possible. I know ..."

"Oh, Dad," I cut him off and squeeze his hand tightly. "You can thank me by getting better."

"What ... happened ... with Wyatt?" Dad struggles.

"Dad, don't exhaust yourself," I say quickly. "Conserve your strength."

"Must ... know," he insists.

"He fell in love with somebody else," I shrug. "It happens."

"I'll ... kill ... him," Dad's eyes start blazing.

"Dad, let it go," I sigh. "I have. There's no use in dwelling on it. It won't change anything."

"Bastard," Dad huffs and I cannot help but smile. Father has never done anything other than to love me unconditionally. When Mom was in a bad mood and took it out on me, he was the one that stepped in.

"I made new friends," I try to cheer him up as I tell him about Drew and Carol. I also describe my cottage, but I am very careful not to mention Axel in any capacity other than an employer.

"I'm happy, Daddy," I smile. "Really, you shouldn't worry about me."

The door opens and an orderly enters.

"It's time," he says as he walks to Dad's bed. "We're going to prep you for the operation."

"Good luck, Dad," I stand up and kiss him gently on his forehead.

"I ... love ... you," Dad smiles.

"I love you more," I let go of his hand. "And I will be right here when you wake up."

I bite back the tears as I walk out of his room. I love him so much and I am so nervous about this operation.

"You need coffee," Nina says the instant she sees me.

"I need wine," I whimper as I walk into her embrace.

"But they don't have any," she rolls her eyes as she drags me to the cafeteria.

"How did your date go with Wilson?" I ask to distract myself from Dad's operation.

"I'm seeing him again tonight," she smiles dreamily. "He's perfect."

"Do you think you're mates?" I ask curiously.

"If we're not, we should be," she grins from ear to ear. "I'm so into him."

"That's ..."

"Liana," the voice sends shivers up my spine and I swing around to face a snarling Gwen who clings to Wyatt like a trophy.

"What are you doing here?" Nina grunts before I can say a word. "Removing some warts? They missed one."

"I don't recall talking to you," Gwen sneers at Nina before she turns to me. "Seems you can't go anywhere these days without a watchdog guarding your battles."

"It's called friends," Nina smiles sarcastically. "A term you're not familiar with."

"What do you want, Gwen?" I cross my arms in front of my chest and glare at her.

"I only wanted to say hello," she laughs softly. "There's no need to be so hostile."

"Okay, goodbye then," I turn around to leave but Wyatt grabs my elbow and I stare at his hand in disbelief.

"If you want to keep that hand, you better remove it," I hiss as I look at him.

"How cute," Gwen giggles. "She's threatening you."

"You can both fuck off," I jerk my elbow free.

"I'm here to see your father," Wyatt surprises me.

"Why?" I frown. "You never liked my parents and how do you even know he's here?"

"Because it's the decent thing to do," Wyatt replies. "He shouldn't be punished for what you've done."

"For what I've done?" I raise my eyebrows. "You despicable little man. Do us all a favour and tuck that enormous ego of yours up your ass. Stay away from me and my family. Believe me, my father doesn't want to see you."

"Not according to Leon," Wyatt smiles smugly. "They're all too grateful for the money I send."

"You gave my brother money?" I ask abbergasted as anger surges through me. I am going to kill Leon when I see him. "Of all the moronic things you've done, this one takes the cake. Even cheating on me makes more sense than giving Leon money."

"Well, he promised you'll pay it back," Wyatt shrugs.

"Yeah, right," I snort. "Good luck with that. This is not my problem."

I turn around to leave and look straight into Axel's eyes. The look on his face is enough to mummify and bury a man on the spot. I do not think I have any person this angry before.

"What's Axel doing here?" Gwen whispers behind me and Wyatt quickly hushes her.

I am frozen on the spot trying to decide if I should run or hide when Axel walks towards us with determined strides.

"Am I interrupting?" Axel's voice is as cold as his eyes, and I cannot master anything other than shaking my head.

"We were just leaving," Nina comes to my rescue, but Axel looks at her and she lowers her gaze.

"Or not," she mumbles under her breath.

"Wyatt," Axel directs his attention to him. "Are you here to discuss repayment terms?"

"I ... uhmm ... yes," Wyatt stutters.

"And how much will you be repaying Liana?" Axel asks sternly and I must blink a couple of times to focus. What is he talking about?

"Axel, you misunderstand," Wyatt chuckles nervously. "She's repaying me."

"Why?" Axel crosses his arms and I look at Wyatt that is suddenly two shades paler.

"For the five thousand her brother borrowed from me," Wyatt replies but he is not as condescending as he was a moment ago.

"Did you know anything about that?" Axel turns to me, and I shake my head.

"Wyatt, then it seems you're talking to the wrong person," Axel continues. "This brings me back to my original question. How much are you repaying her?"

"I don't owe her anything," Wyatt gapes for air like a fish on land.

"Not even for her clothes you destroyed?" Axel raises his eyebrows and Wyatt glares at me with hatred. How the hell does he know that?

"With all due respect, Axel," Wyatt regains his composure. "That's a personal matter between Liana and me."

"And you made it mine," Axel growls and I close my eyes as fear rips through me. I do not think I will ever get used to that sound and not shiver in my shoes. "You made it my problem when you left her high and dry within our borders. How is she supposed to return after you destroyed everything she owned?"

"Axel, I don't know what she told you, but ..."

"Nothing," Axel cuts him off. "She told me nothing. I had to hear it from my driver. I hereby order you to repay Liana fifty thousand dollars."

"No way do I owe her that much!" Wyatt explodes.

"What is the value of her scrapbook?" Axel asks and Wyatt huffs as he looks at me.

"Thought so," Axel sneers.

"What about the money she owes me?" Wyatt argues. "She called off the wedding and I had to carry the expenses."

"You should've thought about that before you dipped your dick in Gwen's honeypot," Axel remarks dryly as he turns on his heels and walks away.

"Holy shit," Nina whispers. "I have goosebumps. Did that really just happen?"

"This is not over," Wyatt grunts as he glares at me with hatred. "Not by a long shot."

"That's not what Axel said," Nina mocks him with pouting lips. "Pay up, lover boy."

"Stay out of this," Wyatt snaps at her. "This doesn't concern you."

"Wanna bet?" Nina raises her eyebrows. "I'm the one that cared for Liana when you dipped your dick. Whom do you think Axel will side with?"

My cell phone chimes in my handbag, and I reach for it like a robot. I still cannot wrap my head around what just happened. I read the message from Axel and turn to Nina.

"I need a moment," I say softly. "I'll meet you in the cafeteria."

"Where are you going?" She calls after me, but I ignore her and walk away as fast as I can.