

## Chapter 81 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“Oh. My. Goddess.” Juliana gapes at me as Axel closes the door behind him. “I must know everything.”

“Don’t you want the sugar water first?” I smile wickedly as I place my handbag on my desk.

“What?” She frowns for a second before life returns to her. “No, I want details. Messy, dirty and colourfully detailed.”

“Since Angela and her parents will be here any minute, I’ll stick to the short version,” I laugh as she pulls her chair to my desk and takes a seat next to me. “Axel is my mate, and we’re getting married. Oh, and he’s telling Angela today.”

“That’s ... that’s awesome,” she says bewildered. “But not nearly enough details. Come on, you can’t do this to me.”

“I’ll have to,” I whisper as Angela and her parents walk towards us. “For now.”

Angela looks deadly beautiful dressed in red, but she does not even acknowledge our existence as she marches passed us with her nose in the air. Alpha Jack and his wife quickly greet us before they follow Angela into Axel’s office.

“Damn, what I wouldn’t give to be a fly on the wall right now,” Juliana giggles as the door shuts behind them.

“I hope she ugly cries and spoils her perfect makeup,” I snort. I do not think I will ever forgive her for what she did with Axel and terrible makeup will not even begin to cover it, but it is a start.

“It’s a pity the room is soundproof,” Juliana's shoulders slump. “We won't hear her yelling and screaming.”

“And there will be yelling and screaming,” I grin.

“Why aren’t you in there?” Juliana turns to me in surprise. “You could’ve witnessed everything first hand.”

“I know,” I sigh. “But Axel wants to keep me safe. He’s always been protective, but I swear that man will lock me up in a padded room until this baby is born.”

“Wait, what?” Juliana gawks at me.

“Yeah,” I smile wickedly. “I left that as a surprise.”

“All of this is a shocker,” Juliana croaks. “You didn’t need an element of surprise.”

“This way is more fun,” I laugh.

“My life suddenly turned bland,” she pouts. “There’s no villains and victims. Only a happy ending.”

“That’s not bland,” I roll my eyes. “That’s perfect. We all strive for that. You’re ten steps ahead of all of us. Besides, this might be entertaining to you, but it’s hell on your soul when another woman is after your mate.”

“Sorry,” Juliana says regretfully. “I didn’t mean ...”

“It’s fine,” I reach over and squeeze her hand. “I get it, and I would’ve agreed if I didn’t have to deal with my feelings. Especially those hateful feelings I’m harbouring towards Angela.”

Suddenly the door bursts open and Juliana and I abruptly go quiet as we stand up and watch Angela and her mother storm out. I lower my gaze to hide my satisfaction when I see her messed-up makeup.

“You,” Angela stops in front of me, and I look up. “Why aren’t you crying?”

“Excuse me?” I look flabbergasted from her towards her mother. Did Angela figure out that I am Axel’s mate? Does she expect me to be remorseful and sorry for her?

“Well, he obviously stopped fucking you now that he found his mate,” she sneers and wipes her cheeks.

“I ...”

“You pitiful human,” she snorts. “You don’t even know. And to think I thought you were a threat. Guess the joke’s on both of us.”

She does not wait for my response and walks towards the elevators with her mother on her heels. Speechless I watch them leave. I doubt that Angela is capable of emotions like sympathy or empathy, but I swear this is the closest she will ever get to it. I am not feeling bad for her, but I just realized how much Angela cares for Axel. Or to be his Luna. I do not know which.

“I was wrong,” Juliana says dryly as I sit down. “Being there when she figures out you’re his mate is going to be much for fun than being a fly on the wall.”

“I feel sorry for her,” I mumble absentmindedly.

“What?” Juliana gapes at me. “Are you insane? She deserves much worse than what she’s been handed.”

“I didn’t mean it like that,” I shake my head. “Angela is a sad, sad person, and I pity her. I don’t care for her and will gladly drive a stake through her stone-cold heart, but it’s sad, really. To be so self-absorbed that you cannot comprehend reality. Can you imagine how disillusioned it must be for her?”

“Serves her right,” Juliana snorts.

“She deserves worse,” I grin. “All I’m saying is, she’s the one that should be pitied, not me.”

“She’s in for one hell of a wake-up call when she learns you’re his mate,” Juliana laughs.

Axel POV

I watch Angela and Mary storm out and frown when Jack makes no effort to follow them. Instead, he takes a seat.

He might have been supportive when I broke the news but that does not mean that he is happy about it. His daughter is distraught and as a father, he would do anything to help her.

“I’m sorry for Angela’s behaviour,” Jack sighs and I relax a little. Maybe Jack is an honourable alpha after all.

“Honestly, I didn’t expect anything else,” I smile stiffly as I sit down. Truthfully, I expected more theatrics from Angela. Maybe a witch’s curse or damnation to hell. But he is already hurting for his daughter, and I am not going to make it worse for him. “It’s understandable that she’s upset.”

“Why did you do it?” Jack asks angrily and I look at him in surprise. Certainly, as an alpha, he must know the answer.

“What do you mean, Jack?” I ask calculated as I rest my elbows on the desk and intertwine my fingers. So much for Jack’s support. “I’m simply obeying our laws.”

“Why did you ask her to marry you when you had no intention of going through with it?” He hisses at me. “My child is hurting and ...”

“Are you kidding me?” I bellow as I fight my anger. “You’re blaming me for this? May I remind you that it’s you and my dad that pressured me into doing it? I said no and you insisted on how wonderful it would be.”

“I know,” he shouts. “But we were counting on you to do the right thing.”

“Accepting my mate is the right thing,” I argue.

“That’s the lawful thing, not the right thing,” his nostrils flare with anger. “When you proposed to Angela, you made a commitment. Not only towards her but towards the Alpha families and the packs. You could’ve rejected your mate, and none would be the wiser. You would still be alpha. For fuck’s sake, contracts were drawn up and signed.”

“I didn’t sign anything,” I smirk and reach into my desk to pull out the marriage contract as well as the contract for Jack’s company’s software.

I toss the contracts on the desk in front of him.

“You deliberately pushed the revision of the contract until I proposed to Angela,” my words are sturdy and calculated as I glare at him. “Once I popped the question, you were eager to continue with business. But I don’t take kindly to bullying, Jack. I was crystal clear that I had no interest in marrying your daughter, but you wouldn’t let it go. You only have yourself to blame for your daughter’s broken heart.”

“Axel, this isn’t ...”

“Enough, Jack,” I snap. “I have no interest in Angela or your business. Accept it for what it is - over.”

“So, dumping my daughter isn’t enough?” He yells. “You must humiliate me as well? What kind of man are you?”

“The kind that doesn’t fuck around,” I bellow. “While you were goofing around with contracts and your daughter’s heart, I did what was lawful and right. And I was upfront and honest about it until you pressured me into a corner. I’m not sorry for not doing business with your company anymore and as sure as hell aren’t sorry about the engagement. Angela’s not my mate, you knew it and you still gambled with her. You lost, deal with it.”

“You’ll regret this,” Jack hisses as he gets up.

“Seriously?” I smirk and cross my arms in front of my chest. “You’re threatening me now because you lost at your own game?”

“That wasn’t a threat,” Jack pulls his shoulders back. “It was a prediction. Because trust me, one day you’ll regret this decision. Once you realize your mate is no match to Angela and that your new business partners aren’t as good as me.”

“Well,” I shrug. “I guess we’ll have to wait and see.”

“You’re a fool,” Jack snorts and looks at me in disgust. “Angela dodged a bullet.”

“If that’s true, you shouldn’t be upset,” I grin. “You should be grateful.”

“Fuck off,” he sneers and walks to the door.

“Jack,” I call after him. “You and your family are banned from our territory. If you dare ...”

“Your father will never allow that!” He swings around and glares at me with blazing eyes. “He’s still the alpha, boy, and you don’t have the authority.”

“You don’t know your best friend at all,” I laugh heartedly. “Jack, of all our laws, my dad respects the mate bond the most. Once he knows about my mate, he will support me. Especially if I tell him that you advised me to reject her and accept Angela.”

Jack stares at me in hatred as I walk towards him.

“As a courtesy towards my parents, you and Mary will be invited to the wedding,” I say. “But Angela isn’t welcome. I wasn’t going to say this out of respect, but that ship has sailed. She’s unstable and needs professional help, Jack. You don’t have to believe me or like my words. But if you love your child, you’ll see to it that she gets the help she needs.”

For a split second, there is a flickering of fear in Jack’s eyes, and I know without a doubt that he knows I am speaking the truth.

“You can shove your wedding invitation,” he grunts and opens the door. “You’ll never see me or my family again.”

The door slams shut behind him and I exhale deeply in relief. It is finally over.

Chapter 82\_Meeting The Parents

## Chapter 82 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“Are you okay?” Axel asks softly and takes my hand as Drew parks in front of the mansion.

“I was,” I inhale deeply and swallow the bile that is rising in my throat. After Jack stormed out of the office, I was relaxed and enjoyed the rest of the day. “I’m either experiencing a new symptom or I’m nervous. I have an overwhelming urge to be sick.”

“Here you go, sweetie,” Drew turns towards us and hands me a packet of salt and vinegar chips. “This will help.”

“Thanks,” I mumble and gratefully open the packet.

“What?” Drew asks Axel when he stares at him in surprise. “Do you also want?”

“No,” he snorts and looks at me with concern. “I’m impressed with your readiness.”

“Well, of course, I’m going to be a grandpa,” Drew snorts as if it is the most natural conclusion, and my heart melts. Drew and Carol are how I imagine parents should be. “I must be ready for everything.”

“See?” He reaches into the glovebox and pulls out a cigar. “I even have you covered for when it’s time.”

“You’re the man, Drew,” Axel chuckles. “Or should I say gramps?”

“What if your parents don’t like me?” I mumble as I devour the chips as if it is my last meal. As entertaining as their banter is, it does absolutely fuck all to calm my nerves.

“Then they’re idiots,” Drew blurts out and quickly looks at Axel. “No disrespect.”

Axel only grins and shakes his head at Drew before he turns his attention to me.

“Liana, you’re perfect and there’s nothing not to like,” he says patiently.

“I love you,” I smile and tenderly stroke his cheek. “And I appreciate what you’re trying to do, but let’s cut the crap. Your parents like Angela, and they’re going to hate me.”

“No, they like Angela’s parents,” he pulls me into his embrace. “Huge difference.”

“But ...”

He smothers my protest with a kiss, and I participate eagerly.

“Liana,” he murmurs against my lips after a moment. “Don’t work yourself up about things you have no control over. If my parents don’t like you, which I doubt, it would be their problem. I love you and I’m not going anywhere.”

“I don’t want to come between you and them,” I sigh as I nestle closer to his chest. “I know how hard it is to lose parents.”

“It will not come to that,” he says urgently and cups my face. “And darling, there’s no choice. You’re my future.”

“I don’t want to interrupt,” Drew whispers as he opens his door. “But we have company.”

“Everything will be fine,” he smiles reassuringly and kisses me quickly before Drew opens the door for us.

I step out and inhale deeply when I see his father waiting. I am doing my utmost best not to freak out and run for the hills. I want to be the strong and fearless Luna Axel deserves, but meeting the parents is harder than I imagined. Because I have a desperate need for them to like me. I already screwed it up with my parents, I do not want a repeat.

Axel takes my hand and I steel myself when he leads me towards his father.

“Hello, Dad,” Axel pulls me close to his side. “Meet my mate, Liana.”

“It’s an honour, Alpha,” I smile bravely.

Grant looks from Axel to me, and his eyes rest a moment on me before he swings around.

“My office, now,” he barks and turns around.

“He likes you,” Axel quickly whispers in my ear.

I do not say a word as we follow Grant. Are Axel and I even at the same place? His father did not even acknowledge my existence, how can he possibly think he likes me?

Axel POV

Liana’s tension is tangible as we walk to Dad’s office. I wish I could ease things for her but nothing that I can say will help. I did not lie when I said Dad likes her. She does not know him the way I do, and I saw it in his eyes.

“Where’s Mother?” I ask as I put my arm protectively around her shoulder and pull her closer.

“Here,” her voice is cold and her glare icy as she looks at us. “But not by choice.”

With her head held high, she strides past us and sits down.

“So, what Jack said is true,” she raises her eyebrows.

“Depends on what he told you,” I snort. “But yes, I did find my mate.”

“Well,” Mother huffs. “Speak, I don’t have the whole day.”

“You know what, Mother,” I hiss as I fight my anger. “With that attitude, you can shove it.”

“Axel Silvermann!” Dad bellows and Liana cowers closer to me. “You shall not talk to your mother that way.”

“And I will not tolerate her dismissive behaviour towards my mate,” I shout back as I hold on tighter to Liana. “Neither of you even had the decency to greet her. You’re supposed to be the leading example for the pack, and this is how you behave. She is my true mate and I love her. Liana is your future daughter-in-law and mother of my child whether you like it or not. Your approval will not change anything. Either you accept her, or you’ll lose me.”

“I didn’t raise you ...”

“Enough!” Dad snaps and silences Mother. “Both of you. We’re all adults here.”

I look Mother in the eyes until she breaks eye contact.

“Now,” Dad continues calmly. “Let’s all have a seat.”

Liana’s hands are trembling as we take a seat next to each other on the couch.

“I’m sorry you had to find out this way,” my words are steady and clear. “But I had no choice.”

“There’s always a choice,” Mother sneers.

“Not when you’re being manipulated, Mom,” I look at her. “The four of you were so eager to marry me and Angela that you made it impossible for me to tell you the truth.”

“Son, that’s not fair,” Dad frowns. “We only suggested Angela because you didn’t have a mate.”

“Should I remind you about our fight?” I squint my eyes at him. “You were ready to disown me if I didn’t agree to marry Angela.”

“Because you didn’t have a mate then,” he sighs tiredly.

“I did,” I admit, and Dad’s eyes widen. “I already found Liana, but I couldn’t tell you because Angela tried to kill her.”

“That’s preposterous,” Mom yells.

“Bullshit!” Dad explodes.

“See?” I smirk at them. “Right there, that’s the reason why I didn’t come to you. You were so impressed with yourselves and the solution that I should marry Angela, that you’re blind to the truth. It didn’t matter to you that I said no. Or that I’m not attracted to Angela or even like her.”



All that mattered to you was your plan and your ideals. For fuck's sake, it wasn't even a private discussion. You bombarded me right there in front of Angela and her parents."

"Why are you saying such hurtful things?" Mom starts crying. "We've known Angela her entire life. She's sweet and kind."

"She's unstable and needs professional help," I insist.

"I need a drink," Dad grunts as he gets up and pours himself a stiff one.

"This is your fault," Mother glares at Liana. "You're poisoning Axel with lies."

"Mom," I warn her. "I swear to the goddess, I will pack my stuff and leave. I would rather be a rogue with Liana than an alpha without her."

"How did you expect me to react, Axel?" Mother explodes. "You banned our friends from our territory and rejected the perfect candidate for a Luna. Who, I should add, we've known since birth. Now you waltz in here with this ... this human girl as a mate and throw accusations of manipulation and instability. We know and trust Angela's family. Of course, it makes sense that this human is spreading toxic lies."

"I'm your son!" I lose my temper and jump up. "How about you give me the benefit of the doubt and trust what I have to say? You're so concerned about your friends, that you're deaf for your own child."

"Your father and I ..."

"Wife, shut up," Dad huffs as he slumps down in his chair.

"Excuse me?" Mom gasps indignantly.

"You heard me," Dad sighs like an old man. "Axel is right. We made it impossible for him to come to us with the truth. If we'd listened to him, all of this ugliness could've been avoided. Suck it up and apologize."

"I will do no such thing," Mom screams.

"Then get out," Dad shrugs.

"Grant Silvermann," Mom hisses. "You better ..."

"Get out of my office!" Dad looks at her with blazing eyes. "If you can't face the facts, go be hysterical elsewhere."

"You're not sleeping in the bed tonight," Mother huffs as she storms out of the office.

“It won’t be the first time,” Dad shouts after her.

“Wow, Dad,” I look at him with concern. “I appreciate the support but she’s still your wife.”

“Son, you’re a grown-ass man and about to get married,” he sighs. “Here’s a tip - couples fight. Which is normal and healthy and it’s all good as long as you make up. If you can’t make up or don’t care to fight, your marriage is in trouble.”

“I know, but you threw her out of your office,” I argue.

“And I threw you with a tomato,” Liana chimes in and Dad bursts out laughing.

“See?” He laughs. “She gets it. You didn’t leave her because of that. You’re here fighting for your mate.”

“Alpha,” Liana clears her throat. “I’m sorry for causing trouble.”

“Nah,” he waves at her. “We owe you and Axel an apology. All of this could’ve been avoided if we created an environment where Axel could come to us. I’m sorry, son.”

“Thanks, Dad,” I say flabbergasted as I sit down next to Liana. Father has never apologized to me before in his life.

“Tell me everything,” Dad gets up and pours himself another drink.

Liana gives me an encouraging smile and I take her hand before I start talking.

Chapter 83\_Rejecting The Mark

## Chapter 83 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

I sit silently next to Axel as he tells his father about us, but I do not listen. My headache from this morning has returned with a bang.

It is unlike anything I have experienced before – including a migraine. There is a disturbing murmur of voices in the back of my head while some idiot is going apeshit on drums at my temples. And to top it off – nausea keeps coming and going in waves.

I close my eyes and take soft, deep breaths.

“Hold on, son,” Grant interrupts Axel’s story. “What’s wrong with her?”

“Liana,” Axel turns to me and cups my face, but it is too painful to open my eyes. “What’s wrong? Talk to me.”

“Just a headache,” I try to sound nonchalant, but I am failing miserably.

“Since when?” He asks concerned as he picks me up. “Why didn’t you say anything?”

“It just started,” I moan. Why is everything so loud?

“Axel, what’s wrong with her?” Grant sounds alarmed.

“I don’t know, Dad,” Axel replies quickly. “Get Michelle, I’m taking her to my room.”

“Walk softer,” I complain when it feels like each step he takes resonates through my head.

“We’re almost there,” he whispers as he takes the stairs two by two.

I bite hard onto my lip to keep myself from making any sounds. I feel so small and weak. No wonder his mother thinks I’m not suitable to be a Luna.

“Where are your pills?” Axel asks as he lays me down on a soft bed.

“My handbag,” I mumble and throw an arm across my eyes. “Please turn off the lights, it’s too bright.”

Even the sound of the light switch is excessively loud as Axel turns it off and switches on a lamp in the corner.

“Michelle is coming,” Grant joins us in the room. “Has this happened before?”

“No,” Axel sighs. “Dad, she’s …”

“Toilet,” I groan and jump up. Instantly, Axel is by my side and carries me to the bathroom. He holds my hair as nausea overcomes me. With each convulsion, my head wants to explode. I want to cry from humiliation and pain but there is no time as I keep on throwing up.

“Where the hell is Michelle?” Axel hisses at his father and I can tell he is on the brink of losing control.

“Axel, it’s been five minutes,” Grant reasons. “She’ll be here as soon as she can.”

“Dad, Liana is pregnant,” Axel sounds desperate. “We must help her.”

“I’m getting your mother,” Grant says hastily.

“No,” I croak as I wipe my mouth. She is the last person I want to see now. She hates me and she will hate my baby. “It’s over, I’m okay.”

“You’re not okay,” Axel grunts as he picks me up and carries me back to bed. “You’re almost transparent.”

“I just need my medication,” I insist. “There’s nothing else to do.”

“Go get it,” Grant orders and sits next to me on the bed. “I’ll stay with her.”

“Thanks, Dad,” Axel sighs relieved and I pinch my eyes closed when his footsteps torture my mind again.

“I’m going to be a grandpa,” he whispers softly in awe as he takes my hand.

“Yes, sir,” I croak despite my best efforts to sound cheerful and happy.

“This is a good day,” he pats my hand. “And I don’t want you to worry about anything, you hear? We’ll take good care of you. Everything will be all right.”

“Thanks for accepting me,” I smile weakly as I squeeze his hand.

“I’m really sorry for being so rude earlier,” he sighs. “I was mad at Axel for shutting me out. I wasn’t ...”

“It’s okay,” I interrupt him. As much as I appreciate his apology, I need silence. The nausea might be over, but my headache is very much alive. “I understand.”

“I’m back,” Axel announces, and I am on the verge of reprimanding him for being so loud when I see his face. And he calls me pale. His green eyes are wide and worried as he helps me up. My fingers are trembling when I take the pills and Axel puts the glass of water against my lips to swallow.

“Thank you,” I sigh and lay back down.

Axel lays down next to me and pulls me close to his chest.

“Don’t worry,” I close my eyes. “The baby is fine.”

\*\*

Axel POV

I can tell by Liana’s breathing that she is sleeping, and I rest my forehead against hers.

“Axel,” Dad says softly. “Michelle is here.”

“A little late, don’t you think?” I growl and pull Liana closer to me.

“Listen,” Dad sighs. “I know you’re worried but don’t lash out at Michelle. Don’t take your emotions out on her, okay? Take it out on me, I know how to deal with it.”

“Dad, I’m not going to make it if something happens to her,” I admit. “I want to yell and scream and break things. I cannot handle this hopelessness. I cannot watch her being so sick and not help her. I want our baby, Dad, but what if ...”

“Don’t go there,” Dad cuts me off sternly. “You don’t know what’s wrong.”

There is a soft knock on the door before Michelle enters the room. She frowns softly as she looks from me and Liana to Dad.

“I’m sorry,” she says confused. “I was told Luna needs help. Where is she?”

“Right here,” I announce proudly. “Liana is my mate. We kept it a secret until now.”

“Dear goddess,” she rubs her forehead. “You don’t keep secrets from your physician. Are you telling me she’s pregnant with your baby?”

“Yes,” I gently let go of Liana and stand up.

“With all due respect, Alpha,” Michelle grunts. “She’s a human and she’s pregnant with an alpha’s baby. I should’ve known that from the beginning. She’s going to need much stronger medication to carry the child to term.”

“You’ve known she is pregnant a lot longer than me,” I protest.

“What happened tonight?” Michelle ignores my reply as she takes Liana’s pulse and I tell her in as much detail as I can. Including the morning’s headache.

“Have you marked her?” Michelle asks softly as she gently touches Liana’s stomach.

“Yes,” I cross my arms in front of my chest. “This weekend.”

Michelle does not say a word as she continues examining Liana and her silence is driving me insane. I need to know what is wrong, but her stoic face does not give anything away.

“Liana and the baby are fine,” she announces after what feels like an eternity.

“Oh, thank goddess,” I sigh and slump down on the corner of the bed. Dad comes to stand next to me and rests his hand encouragingly on my shoulder.

“But her mark is swollen,” her words splinter my fleeting serenity.

“What does that mean?” Dad asks on my behalf.

“Several things,” she sighs heavily. “Worst case, she’s rejecting your mark.”

“Impossible,” Dad hisses. “Why would her body keep the baby and reject the mark?”

“I didn’t say the baby will make it if she rejects the mark,” Michelle looks at me with sympathy.

“You mean ...” the words get stuck, and I cannot bring myself to utter it.

“Yes,” she sighs. “If Liana rejects your mark, she’ll reject your baby as well and she’ll miscarry.”

“Goddess, no,” I bury my face in my hands and start crying. I do not need Liana to bear my mark. I love her and will still marry her. But I doubt that she will be able to accept and live with it.

“Why is this happening?” Dad asks distraught.

“The alpha baby is too strong for a human mother,” Michelle explains patiently. “It depletes all her resources, and her body is fighting back to survive. Without medical intervention, Liana will either miscarry or die.”

“And the baby dies either way,” Dad’s fingers bore into my shoulder.

“Yes, but gentlemen, that’s the worst case,” Michelle’s soft words finally register, and I nod as I fight to pull myself together. “She might not reject the mark. It could be swollen because she was marked after she became pregnant. When she was pregnant without the mark, she was fine. Adding the mark, added more strain to her body. This could be something as simple as her body trying to heal the mark and keeping the baby. With time ...”

“No,” I jump up and ball my fists as I fight the agony. “We cannot idly sit around and wait and see. There must be preventive measures. Surely, she’s not the first human carrying an alpha’s child.”

“I was getting to that,” Michelle smiles patiently. “With time her body will adjust, and she won’t have this issue with future pregnancies. The first pregnancy is the hardest and riskiest. With blood transfusions from the biological father, there has been a hundred percent success rate when started early. But those odds declined rapidly the longer you wait.”

“Then why are we wasting time discussing it?” I grunt as I roll up my sleeve. “Get the needles, doctor.”

“You need to be healthy,” She states. “No illness, or drugs in your system. No new piercings or tattoos. I assume I don’t have to ask about multiple sex partners.”

I give her a deathly glare and she shrugs.

“Due diligence, Alpha,” she says. “This is about my patient's health and not your ego. Technically, I should test your blood before giving it to her.”

“We don't have time for that,” I grunt. “And my answer is no to all of the above.”

“Okay,” she nods after a moment. “But only this time.”

“We need to do this once a week,” Michelle says as she takes out needles and tubes. “I expect you at my office every Monday for a blood donation so that it can be screened before I give it to her.”

“Fine, whatever,” I grunt as I sit down next to Liana. “Just save them.”

“I'm also increasing her prenatal vitamins,” Michelle continues as if I have not said a word. “And you need to ensure that she eats at least six times a day.”

“What else?” I ask as the needle pricks my skin.

“Congratulations on finding your mate, Alpha,” she smiles at me.

## Chapter 84\_In This Together

# Chapter 84 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

It feels like I have slept for an eternity when I wake up. I take a moment to assess myself, but there is no headache or nausea. On the contrary, I feel great. I cannot remember when last I felt this good and well-rested.

“Easy, Luna,” Adele says when I sit up.

“What are you doing here?” I ask surprised when I see her sitting in a chair next to the bed. “And it's Liana, not Luna.”

“For now,” she smiles. “In two months, you'll officially be called Luna by all the pack members.”

“Just don't call me that in front of Axel's mother,” I sigh. “She hates me enough as it is.”

“She doesn’t hate you,” Adele looks sympathetically at me. “She’s just disappointed that her dream won’t come true. Mary is her best friend, and they were so excited for Axel and Angela to get married.”

“And she told you that?” I raise my eyebrows doubtfully. I understand that Adele will be loyal towards her Luna, but I sincerely doubt that they have the kind of relationship where they confess their feelings.

“No,” she snorts. “The Omegas did. Take it from me, if you don’t want something to become public knowledge, don’t discuss it in front of an Omega. Ever. And if you’re wondering, the answer is yes. By now the entire pack knows about you and your baby.”

I overthink her words a moment before it hits me. Did Angela also hear the news? Adele is my protection. It cannot be good if she is here and not Axel.

“Where’s Axel?” I ask concerned. “Did something happen?”

“Everything is fine,” she smiles reassuringly. “Axel will explain when he’s back.”

“Back from where?” I frown and get off the bed, but Adele is instantly by my side.

“Please stay in bed,” she pleads. “I’m under strict orders that you’re not allowed to get up.”

“Even when I need the bathroom?” I raise my eyebrows.

“Are you feeling sick again?” She gives me a panicked look.

“No, Adele,” I sigh and walk to the bathroom. “Nature’s calling.”

“O ... okay,” sheepishly she looks away. “But I’ll be right here if you need me.”

“I’ll call you if I’m out of toilet paper,” I grin as I close the door.

\*\*

“So, what did I miss?” I ask Adele as I walk out of the bathroom and back to my bed. “I took a nap and now I’m under protection.”

“Not protection, more monitoring,” Adele smiles. “Alpha Axel will explain when he’s done with his conference call. He didn’t want you to wake up all alone.”

“Doesn’t it annoy you to babysit me?” I shake my head. “I mean, you’re a kickass warrior and now you must hold my hand in case I’m scared.”

“Are you kidding?” Adele snorts. “I’m Gamma. That makes me the highest female rank. I’ll watch paint dry for that honour.”



“Just out of curiosity,” I squint my eyes. “As Luna, I outrank you, right?”

“Mostly, yes,” she replies cautiously. “Except when you’re in danger. Then it’s my job to keep you safe and you must follow my orders.”

“Good,” I smile and stand up. “The danger I’m in right now is starvation. Let’s go find something to eat.”

“Axel outranks you,” she protests quickly. “I can’t let you leave.”

“I assume that you’re aware of my pregnancy’s effects,” I cross my arms in front of my chest. “And I need to eat, doctor’s orders. So, where does that fit into your protocol?”

“Easy,” she smiles brightly. “I’ll order an Omega to bring you food.”

“Unless this mansion is under attack and I should hide for my life, I’m going to the kitchen,” I say adamantly.

“No,” Adele presses her back against the door and spreads her arms and legs like a starfish. “You’re going to get me into trouble. An Omega will bring you food.”

“Adele, this is ridiculous, you look like Patrick from Spongebob Squarepants,” I roll my eyes. “I’m pregnant, not an invalid. Let me go to the kitchen.”

“Luna, this is my first day of duty. Please don’t complicate this,” she pleads.

“I’m not trying to get you into trouble,” I reason. “Axel will understand.”

The door behind Adele starts rattling and she quickly stands aside.

“What the hell is going on here?” Axel demands as he walks inside. “Why’s the door barricaded?”

“Because you told her I can’t leave,” I huff.

“Thank you, Adele,” Axel smiles at her and I develop an urge to slap the smile off his face. “Good job, you may go now.”

“What the fuck, Axel,” I hiss as the door closes behind Adele. “I’m not Rapunzel. You can’t keep me locked up in here.”

“I’m not,” he exhales, and I calm down when I notice how tired he looks. “I only wanted to be sure you’re alright while I’m gone.”

“What aren’t you telling me?” I demand nervously.

“Let’s sit down,” he suggests, and I follow him to bed with knots in my stomach. This does not sound good.

“Is our baby okay?” My bottom lip starts quivering when I look into his worried eyes.

“For now, yes,” he takes my hands and tells me what happened.

For a long time, I can only stare at him as I process the words. For days I fought an internal struggle if I should keep the baby. I was wasting my time; this baby was deciding for me.

“Are you okay?” Axel’s voice slowly registers through my chaotic thoughts.

“I ... no, this ...” I exhale deeply and close my eyes as I fight the hopelessness and despair. “How are we supposed to do this?”

“Michelle said ...”

“Not that,” I sniff and jump up. I close my eyes briefly and push my fingers through my hair.

“All of this, Axel,” I sigh. “Everything and everyone are against us. Angela, your mother and now even the universe has jumped in to ruin us. How are we supposed to be happy with all the odds against us?”

“Are you giving up on us?” Axel is as white as a sheet as he mumbles the words.

“No,” I say hastily as I climb onto his lap, throw my arms around his neck and bury my face in his neck. Instantly his arms are around my waist like iron clamps. “Never. That’s not what I meant. Everything else. It’s just so overwhelming. I cannot lose Wolfie, Axel. I don’t want to lose our baby.”

“And you haven’t,” his voice is hoarse with emotion. “Wolfie is still with us.”

“I feel so guilty,” I admit and start crying. “In the beginning, I didn’t know if I wanted to keep the baby and now ... maybe he felt it. Maybe Wolfie doesn’t feel loved and doesn’t want to be born.”

“Do you really believe that?” Axel mumbles as he pulls me closer.

“No,” I sob harder. “I already love Wolfie. It’s just ... stress isn’t good for the pregnancy, and now I’m stressed because we might lose him and it’s a snowball effect. I doubt myself, my body and my abilities. I don’t want to screw this up.”

“My dad told me something once,” he says softly. “He said nothing, and nobody can make you feel so much like a failure like your children. You’re always going to wonder if you did the right thing or if you did enough. That sounds very much like what you’re feeling right now.”

“Your dad’s a wise man,” I sniff as I fight to gain control of myself.

“Liana,” Axel gently pushes me away and I wipe my face. “Have you had any symptoms since you woke up?”

“No,” I sniff and shake my head. “I’m just hungry.”

“See,” he smiles softly. “The transfusion worked. We simply have to follow the rules, and everything will work out fine.”

“I’m still scared,” I admit.

“So am I,” he gently kisses me. “I feel exactly like you. But we’ll take this journey together.”

“Promise me you’ll always be my voice of reason. I can’t do this without you,” I cup his face.

“I promise,” he softly kisses me.

“Thank you,” I sigh. “For being so supportive and understanding. And mostly for accepting my crazy.”

“I love you for all that you are,” he smiles, and I crumple.

I pull his lips to mine and kiss him long and tenderly until I am a puddle of happiness and serenity. I must have done something right over the years to deserve such a wonderful and perfect man.

“Axel,” Grant knocks on the door and reluctantly I let go of him. “Is everything okay?”

“Come in, Dad,” Axel replies and smiles at me before I jump up and run to the bathroom to wash my face. Axel has seen me in every form possible, but I might scare his dad with this face.

“Oh, wow,” I exclaim when I get out of the bathroom and witness the bedroom being transformed into a dining room. Omegas have carried in a table and chairs and are setting the table.

“I hope I’m not overstepping,” Grant smiles uncomfortably. “Adele said you’re hungry and since my wife is still ignoring me, I was hoping to join you.”

“Of course,” I laugh happily. Now I know why Axel is such a good man, he is a chip off the old block.

“But this wasn’t necessary,” I smile softly but my stomach growls excitedly when the aromas hit me. “We would’ve joined you in the dining room.”

“Hey, you’re giving me a grandchild,” he grins from ear to ear. “The least I can do is feed you comfortably.”

“You’re so kind, Grant, thank you,” I say appreciatively as I walk to Axel and snuggle against him.

“Speaking off,” he awkwardly rubs the back of his neck. “I was wondering if you would like to call me Dad. You know since we’re family now. But only if you want to.”

“I would love that, Dad,” the word rolls effortlessly off my tongue as I walk to him and hug him.

“Well,” he clears his throat when I let go of him. “I heard the doctor’s orders, we should eat.”

Chapter 85\_Pink Or Blue

## Chapter 85 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

I am lying on my side and staring at a sleeping Axel. Sometimes I must pinch myself to make sure I am not dreaming. This gorgeous god of a man is mine and he loves me. It has been four weeks since I moved in with him and my life is a fairytale - literally.

I have my prince charming, the kind king and the evil stepmother. Well, in my case, mother-in-law. She still has not warmed up to me. Sure, she is polite, and I cannot fault her for her manners, but the room’s temperature drops to zero when she walks in when I am present.

There was a moment when I thought we broke through the barrier when we told her I am pregnant, but as soon as she heard about the blood transfusions, she turned cold again. In her eyes, I am simply not fit to be a Luna, and my difficulty keeping this baby is proof to her.

Fortunately, Grant adores me and is doing everything to help me and make me feel welcome. He is the one training me for my role as future Luna when Axel is at work.

Quitting my job was not my first choice, but I did not even argue when Axel asked me to resign. Not only is it for the safety of our baby, but I also need to step it up as Luna. And I did not like the stares and whispers when I went to work after we became public knowledge. But it was my choice to stop the art classes. Axel and Luther might have talked things through, but it is still a little awkward for me.

“Why are you awake?” Axel asks groggily and reaches for me.

“Did you forget what day it is?” I laugh as I nestle closer to him.

“It’s Wednesday, isn’t it?” He yawns and I lay my head on his chest.

“You did forget,” I pout and roll away.

“No, I haven’t,” he chuckles as his arm goes around my waist and he pulls my back against his chest. “Our appointment with Michelle, but I’m not getting my hopes up again. Wolfie refuses to reveal his gender.”

“Today will be different,” I insist. “I just know it.”

“I care to know,” he mumbles in my neck as his hand glides over my breasts to my stomach where a little bump is starting to show. “But I don’t mind waiting.”

“I know,” I sigh contently as I allow myself to get lost in his touch. “But it’s nice to be excited about normal things like the baby’s gender instead of worrying if he’ll survive.”

“Michelle said we’re past the worst,” Axel pulls me onto my back and leans over to softly kiss me. “You and Wolfie are fine.”

“All thanks to your super blood,” I grin as I throw my arms around his neck. “I haven’t had a single symptom since that night.”

“No symptoms?” He gives me a wicked smile and rolls away to stand up.

“Don’t you dare,” I grab his arm and pull him down onto his back.

“No symptoms, but one,” I say as I straddle his lap. Since I reached the second trimester, I am downright horny. There is no nice way to put it.

“And I love the symptom,” he chuckles as his hand slides up my thighs, over my stomach and settles on my breasts.

“Enjoy it while you can,” I glide my hands over his muscular chest, and he sits upright to kiss me.

Without breaking contact, I lift my hips and slowly lower myself onto him as I revel in the exquisite feeling of him inside me. His hands roam my back and I tighten my grip around his neck and push closer to him. I move my hips faster as my desire builds higher. The friction of our bodies ignites sparks all over my skin and I moan softly as I feel my orgasm getting closer.

Axel pushes me slightly backwards and I place my hands on his knees behind me to support myself as his lips trail down my neck towards my cleavage.

“Ah, yes,” I gasp when he takes my nipple into his mouth.

“Axel,” Grant knocks on the door.

“Just a minute, Dad,” Axel shouts and frustrated beyond measure I lean forward and rest my head on his shoulder. I am about to get off his lap, but he gets a firm hold of my hips and continues our rhythm. Surprised, but happy, I bite onto my bottom lip not to make a sound as I get closer and closer to release.

“I don’t want to come in,” Grant replies. “I was just wondering if Liana would be okay if I join you for the doctor’s visit today?”

“Ah! Yes!” I yell as my orgasm hits me hard, but I do not stop moving until Axel finds release.

“Thanks, Liana,” Grant replies.

“You’re welcome,” I mumble as I lay trembling against Axel’s chest.

“Now that was an enthusiastic yes,” Axel chuckles before claiming my lips.

\*\*

“Ready?” Axel asks patiently when I walk out of the bathroom.

“Let’s go,” I smile as I pick up my handbag.

Hand in hand we leave the room and join Adele who is already waiting for us in the hallway.

“My phone,” Axel stops dead in his tracks. “I left it in the room, I’ll meet you at the car.”

“Who has baby brain now?” I smirk when he dashes towards the room as Adele and I continue walking.

“Good morning, Mrs Silvermann,” I greet her friendly when we pass the living room. “Are you also joining us today?”

“Why would I want to do that?” She snorts unladylike before getting up and leaving the room.

“I know this is none of my business,” Adele whispers as we walk outside. “But why do you even bother with her? If she treated me like that, I would’ve ignored her.”

“I survived my mother,” I grin. “This is nothing in comparison. And I respect her as Axel’s mother. She raised a good man, surely she can’t be all bad.”

“No, she’s not,” Adele admits. “But what she’s doing, isn’t right or Luna like.”

“It doesn’t matter,” I shrug. “And you must remember, her son and her husband took my side against her and supported me. That must be a bitter pill to swallow.”

“You’re already a better Luna than her,” Adele smiles but I choose to ignore the compliment. As much as it warms my heart, I am not in competition with Axel’s mother.

“That’s quite an entourage,” I gasp when we reach the cars.

“Because you have quite a fan club,” Adele laughs.

Grant, Drew, Carol, David and Nick are all gathered and look at me when we walk closer.

“What’s all this?” I laugh flabbergasted. “You know I’m not giving birth today, right?”

“Support,” Grant motions to Drew and Carol. “And the rest is security.”

“When the alphas are moving, we are moving,” David grins.

“Then get moving,” Axel orders as he joins us.

\*\*

Axel helps me onto the bed in the examination room while Grant, Drew and Carol stand aside.

“Dear goddess,” Michelle’s eyes widen when she steps into the room. “This is a lot of people.”

“Are you going to make us leave?” Carol asks softly.

“It depends on Liana,” Michelle looks at me.

“They can stay,” I smile reassuringly. “They’re all family.”

“Okay,” Michelle nods. “But only for the ultrasound. After that, Mom and Dad are the only ones allowed.”

“We appreciate it, Doctor,” Grant smiles and Michelle nods.

Axel comes to stand next to me and takes my hand. Nobody says a word as Michelle starts working. Everybody’s eyes are glued onto the monitor.

“Measurements are within range,” Michelle reports after a while. “Heart and other organs are normal. Everything seems fine. Just like last week.”

“And?” Axel asks eagerly as his grip on my hand tightens.

“And it looks like a boy,” she chuckles.

“I knew it!” Axel exclaims as he bends over and kisses me.

“Well done, son,” Grant pats Axel on the back and looks proudly at me. “You too, Liana.”

“I’m just happy the baby is fine,” Carol sniffs. “And I’ll buy more blue wool.”

“Okay, everybody out,” Michelle says friendly, but firmly.

“Gunter would be a good name,” Grant says to Drew as they leave. “Strong and manly.”

“Hell, no,” Drew huffs. “It sounds like a German rifle. Now André is a solid choice.”

“Grandfathers,” Michelle sighs as she turns back to me. “They’re all the same. How are you doing, Liana?”

“Honestly, I feel great,” I smile as I hold out my arm for her to draw blood. “I don’t even have morning sickness, fatigue or heartburn.”

“That’s excellent,” she smiles. “You made quite a turnaround and ... what the hell?”

“What’s wrong?” Axel asks and instantly, my heart is in my throat.

“Nothing,” she frowns and holds up the needle. “It broke. There’s not even a mark on her skin. I will contact the supplier; this must be a defect.”

“Has that ever happened before?” Axel frowns.

“Only with wolves but ...” Abruptly she goes quiet before she looks at us with a bright smile. “It must be the blood transfusions. It’s working so well that Liana’s skin is now the same density as a wolf’s. Regular needles won’t work on her anymore.”

“Is that a bad thing?” I ask nervously.

“Not at all,” she smiles as she takes out a bigger needle. With wide eyes I watch her insert it in my arm without any problems.

“That didn’t even hurt,” I whisper in surprise. “Am I turning into a wolf?”

“That I don’t know,” she shakes her head. “Have you noticed your hearing and vision improving?”

“Not that I’m aware of,” I mumble.

“I’m going to run more tests,” she replies. “But if I’m correct, you’re already a wolf. Whether or not you’re going to be one after birth, remains to be seen.”

“What about your research?” Axel asks. “The studies you read about the transfusions, doesn’t that mention anything?”



“In all the cases, the women remained human,” she sighs. “In fact, in all of the cases, this hasn’t happened. If my suspicions are correct, this is a first.”

“Fuck me,” I mumble.

## Chapter 86 Losing Business

# Chapter 86 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“My blood turned her into a wolf?” Axel asks cautiously.

“The correct answer is, I don’t know,” Michelle replies. “We have no references to work with. I’m just in the dark as you are and I’m going with my gut.”

“And your gut says I’m changing,” I sigh. “Or has already changed.”

“If you had all the wolf’s trades I would’ve said yes,” Michelle explains. “Until then, it’s mostly a maybe. But humans always have some difficulty carrying a wolf’s baby to term. You have little to no pregnancy symptoms or problems and you’re not even halfway through the pregnancy. I’m not going to risk your health and the baby by stopping the blood transfusions. There’s no way to tell what’s going to happen in the end.”

“Okay, then,” I climb off the bed. “Let’s go home.”

“Liana, are you sure you’re okay?” Axel asks as he and Michelle study me suspiciously.

“Yes, Alpha,” I wink at him, but he does not even smile, and I sigh inwardly. “Axel, there’s nothing we can do now but wait and see. By all medical terms, I’m healthy and so is our baby. Sure, my condition is a bit of a mystery but that’s not going to change if I stay here.”

“She’s right,” Michelle nods. “I’ll run every possible test I can while you monitor her and her symptoms.”

I hold my hand out to Axel, and he takes it. Together we say goodbye to Michelle and leave.

“I have a meeting, but I’m going to cancel it,” Axel says as we walk to the car. “I don’t want to leave you alone right now.”

“No, Axel,” I stop dead in my tracks and force him to turn to me. “This isn’t a health scare. Wolfie and I aren’t in danger. Drew’s going to take me and your dad home and you go to the office.”

“But ...”

“Go,” I silence him with a quick kiss. “I have wedding arrangements to finalize, and you have to generate funds to afford it.”

“I never took you for a gold digger,” he smirks as he places his palm against my cheek.

“Oh, definitely,” I sigh theatrically. “I want everything that glitters.”

“I love you,” he laughs heartedly before he kisses me tenderly. “I’ll see you at home.”

I smile softly as I watch him get into the car and leave.

“Ready Luna?” Adele asks and I nod.

I am about to get into the car when I notice a familiar figure. Even from a distance she looks sad and lost.

“Hold on, I know her,” I say as I start walking.

“I’m not allowed to leave you alone,” Adele says as she follows me.

“Then come along,” I grin.

With long strides, I walk towards the lonely figure.

“Hello, Gwen,” I greet her politely and she blinks a few times before she recognises me. “How are you?”

“So, it’s true,” she sneers as she looks from me to Adele. “You’re the alpha’s mate.”

“Yes, it is,” I smile. “But I’m not here to talk about me. I want to know how you’re doing?”

“Why?” She snorts. “Do you want to take what I have left?”

“What?” I frown dumbstruck. “I don’t understand.”

“Oh, cut the crap, Liana,” Gwen yells. “You’re not the victim here. You never were.”

“And I never claimed to be one,” I cross my arms in front of my chest. “I still didn’t take anything from you.”

“Bullshit,” she screams and instantly Adele places herself between me and Gwen

“Watch your mouth,” Adele hisses. “You don’t talk like that to your future Luna.”

“It’s okay, Adele,” I say softly, and she comes to stand next to me. “I want to hear what she has to say.”

“He was mine,” Gwen starts crying. “He was mine first. We were in love and then you came along, and everything went to shit.”

“Gwen, I’m a human,” my words are soft and calculated. “I would’ve never known that he was my mate if he didn’t tell me so. You know how many times he came to my restaurant until I agreed to go out with him. You were there, for goddess’ sake. You’re blaming the wrong person.”

“Don’t,” she hisses as she nearly pushes a finger up my nose. “Don’t you dare blame him. He’s dead and it’s your fault.”

“There are none so blind as those who will not see,” I smile sadly. “I’m sorry for your loss, Gwen. Best of luck to you.”

I turn around and walk back to the car.

“You still don’t get it!” Gwen yells and I turn back to face her. “You took everything from me. The man that I loved and the life I desired. Look at you! You’re mated to the alpha and are surrounded by luxury. That was supposed to be my life and now you’re living it.”

“That’s not my life,” I laugh sarcastically. “That’s what you see, but it’s not my life. I’m mated to the love of my life, Gwen. And I’m surrounded by people that care. That’s all that matters to me.”

“Oh, it’s so easy for you,” she looks at me as if I crawled out of a gutter. “Judging me from your holier than thou pedestal.”

“No, Gwen,” I shake my head. “I was too hurt and betrayed by you to have time to judge you.”

Gwen does not respond as Adele and I turn around and walk back to the car.

“Adele,” I say softly when Gwen cannot hear us anymore. “I want you to arrange for someone to keep an eye on her. She doesn’t look well and there’s a little boy at home.”

“Sure,” she agrees. “But I’ll have to inform Axel.”

“I didn’t expect anything else,” I smirk. “As long as I’m not planning a surprise party for Axel, you’re free to report to him anything I say or do.”

Axel POV

My meeting is the furthest thing on my mind as I sit at my desk and wait for my visitors. I am not sure if I am excited or anxious about Liana's condition. After I got to know her, it did not matter to me that she was a human. I will love her even if she is a three-headed leprechaun. But it is exhilarating to imagine her as a wolf.

There is a knock on my door before Juliana allows my visitor to enter.

"Austin," I get up to shake his hand. "Nice to see you again."

"Thanks for meeting with me," he smiles and takes the seat I am offering to him.

"I hope there's no trouble," I sit down and look at him. "I'm very satisfied with our deal."

"So am I," he rubs his neck uncomfortable. "But something has happened, and it has our board on edge."

"I'm listening," I say as alarm bells start blaring in my head.

"We received this," he reaches into his briefcase and hands me a document. "It's from your previous supplier, Jack."

"I see," I murmur as I scan the document and the longer I read, the angrier I get.

"Let me assure you, Austin," I put the document down and look at him. "This isn't what happened. I didn't place a year's worth of supplies and cancelled at the last minute."

"Though nothing illegal has transpired, we cannot afford such a loss," Austin admits. "Our company is still in its infant stage. We cannot increase production just to be stuck with redundant stock. Financially, we simply will not survive."

"Okay," I nod. "What do you propose?"

"I hate to say it, but the board feels that we should cancel," he sighs. "According to our contract, the penalties for contract breach are less than the alternative."

I take a moment to calm myself and overthink his words. I did an extensive background check on Austin, and I know he is trustworthy. I also know that he is from a middle-class family and needed capital to start his business.

"I don't care what your board says," I look him dead in the eyes. "I made a deal with you and not with them. I want to know how you feel about this?"

He looks at me for a moment before he smiles.

“I would like to continue doing business with you,” he admits. “You’re our biggest client and I liked you from the first time you came to see me. But it’s not entirely in my hands, Axel. If the board votes against me, my hands are tied.”

“In that case, we can come to an agreement,” I smile satisfied. “I will pay the entire year’s order in advance.”

“Axel, that’s financially stupid,” he shakes his head in disbelief. “You’ll lose thousands of dollars’ interest.”

“For me, this isn’t about money, Austin,” I say thoughtfully. “It’s about trust and honour. This is an investment for me in your company and you. Your software is excellent, and I want it. But more than that, you’re a good, hardworking man and I want to do business with you. So, to get your board off your back, I’ll pay in advance and everyone’s happy.”

“I don’t know what to say,” he chuckles. “I came here with the very unpleasant task of cancelling our business. I didn’t expect this in a million years.”

“I’ll arrange for payment before you leave for Dallas,” I smile reassuringly.

“May I ask one more thing?” He asks cautiously and I nod. “If you’re willing to do this for me – a practical stranger – why are your business partner of decades slandering you?”

“I was engaged to his daughter,” I sigh. “But I called it off and now he’s pissed. It’s a complicated and messed-up story. But that’s between you and me. Your board doesn’t need to know that.”

“Personal reasons,” he nods. “I get it.”

“I’m going to give you copies of our correspondence,” I add. “That will be enough proof to your board that I didn’t place any orders or backed out at the last minute. Jack’s claims are lies and simply a manner to get back at me. Needless to say, we parted on bad terms.”

“I’d appreciate that,” Austin stands up and smiles from ear to ear. “And I must add, after today’s meeting, I’m looking at a bonus. Securing an income of this magnitude for a year is unheard of.”

“Not to mention the years to follow,” I say satisfied. Jack did not win this round.

/Chapter 87\_Fighting Mother

## Chapter 87 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“You’re up early,” I stretch out lazily as I watch Axel put on his tie.

“It’s not that early,” he chuckles. “You slept in.”

“Really?” Surprised I look at my watch. “Why didn’t you wake me?”

“Because you don’t need to be awake at the crack of dawn to pick out flowers for the wedding reception,” he smirks as he comes to sit down next to me and leans in for a kiss.

“Can we go shopping on Saturday?” I ask as I curl up in his lap and drape my arms around his neck. “Wolfie needs a crib, among other things, and I don’t want to do it without you.”

“Other things like a name?” He raises his eyebrows as his arms go around my waist.

“Yeah,” I sigh theatrically. “I have no ideas. Sticking with Wolfie would be fine by me.”

“Short for Wolfgang?” He mocks and I pull my face in disgust.

“I love you,” he kisses me lovingly before he leaves, and I get out of bed to get ready for the day.

\*\*

I stare at the dining room table that is covered with cake samples. I need Axel for this, I sigh inwardly. Every single one tastes delicious to me. But he is a busy man, and I cannot waste his time with frivolous things.

I pick up my fork and take a second bite of my favourites.

“Is all of this sugar good for the baby?” Evil mother-in-law smirks as she enters the room.

I sigh inwardly and drop my fork. She has officially spoiled carrot cake for me. Now, I will always associate it with her, and the taste is bitter.

“It’s a boy,” I reply nonchalantly. “I don’t know if you heard.”

“I did,” she smirks. “And it’s a poor substitute for the son you stole from me.”

Instantly, vivid, white-hot anger surges through me and I look at her with blazing eyes.

“My son is no substitute,” I hiss as I stand up and walk towards her. “And I didn’t steal your son.”

“You did,” she shouts angrily. “You took him from me. He turned against me, and you did that.”

“Axel is not someone to take,” I yell back at her as I completely lose my grip on my temper. “He’s someone to love. There’s no sides here, Luna. You made a conscious decision not to be part of this. You can have both your son and grandson in your life but you’re shutting them out. Axel is living right here under your roof. He hasn’t left. He is right here.”

“He might as well not be,” she argues. “He hardly talks to me. You poisoned him and my husband. I’m a ghost in my own home.”

“You walked out on them,” I throw my hands up in despair. “Not the other way around. All because you don’t approve of me. Remember Luna, love for your own doesn’t mean hate for others. You don’t have to like or love me, but you will respect me as the mother of this child just as I respect you for being Axel’s.”

“Respect?” She spits. “You call talking to me like this respect?”

“Yes,” I grunt. “I do respect you. You raised a damn fine man and I love him. He is strong and kind and has a brilliant mind. For that, I respect you, but what you’re doing now is despicable. You cannot call yourself a good mother if you shut him out when he disagrees with you. It’s cruel to expect him to turn his back on his mate and child simply because you don’t approve of me.”

“If you love him so much, why don’t you do the honourable thing and leave?” She smirks.

“Honourable?” I ask in disbelief. “Keeping my son away from his father is honourable?”

“No,” she lifts her chin. “You leave the baby and disappear.”

“Fuck. You.” I spell it out clearly and slowly as my anger rises.

“You do not speak to me like that,” she warns me. “I’m still the Luna.”

“I don’t give a fuck about the Luna title,” I shout beside myself in anger. “I care about the title mother and grandmother. You might not deem me worthy, but right now, I’m more of a mother than you because I will never give up my child. For decades I fought for love and approval from my mother only to learn that it would never happen. I’ll be damned if my child grows up in a toxic environment like that. My son will be loved unconditionally as long as there is air in my lungs. He will never have to prove himself to me or his father. He will never have to beg to be loved. So, fuck you and your title. You will not come near my child until you prove to me that you’re capable of shoving your prejudice up your ass and showing love.”

My heart is racing, and my ears are ringing as I glare at her. It takes every ounce of self-control not to slap the bejesus out of her.

“I’m done with seeking approval from you, my mother or anyone else,” my words are soft and calculated. “I’ve been patient and polite despite your dismissive behaviour, but I’m done. You went too far.”

Infuriated, I storm past her. I need to remove myself from this situation or I will kill her.

“Your own mother couldn’t even love you,” she yells. “Whatever made you think I could?”

I grab the doorframe and inhale deeply to calm myself. I look up straight into the bewildered eyes of an Omega. I remember Adele’s warning and smirk before I turn to face her.

“Congratulations,” I smile sweetly. “You just compared yourself to a narcissistic bitch. And just to be clear, not once did I ask for your love. Have fun with that.”

She pales visible and I release my grip on the doorframe.

“One more thing,” I hiss. “When you report my dreadful behaviour to Axel, make sure to mention that you suggested that I desert him and his son. Make no mistake, Luna, I will repeat this conversation word for word. And that poor Omega that has been eavesdropping can back me up.”

I turn my back on her and storm away. Never in my life have I been this angry and I cannot control it.

Once I am outside in the garden, I inhale the fresh air deeply and count to ten, but it does not help. My heart keeps on racing and my head starts throbbing.

“Fuck,” I grunt as I sit down on the nearest chair. I need to calm down, this cannot be good for Wolfie, but my anger does not want to let go.

Adele, I think as I stand up. I need to find her so she can take me to Michelle.

“I’m here,” Adele announces from behind me.

“How did you know I was looking for you?” I look at her in surprise.

“You mind-link me,” she frowns before her eyes widen. “You mind-linked me! Do you know what that means?”

“Get me to the doctor,” I grunt. “Now.”

My heart and head want to explode as we rush to the car. But the headache is not nearly as bad as my anger.

“You need to go faster,” I grunt as I open and close my fists while Adele speeds down the road.

“What’s wrong?” Adele asks concerned as she accelerates.

“I’m about to have a fucking heart attack or pop an artery,” I explode as my heart starts beating in my throat and ears.



Adele goes quiet and keeps her eyes on the road.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry,” I apologise. “Please don’t take it personally. I can’t control it.”

“It’s okay,” she says quickly. “I know this isn’t you. It’s fine.”

“I’m sorry,” I mumble as I lay back and close my eyes. “I need to calm down and I can’t.”

“Just breathe,” Adele says.

“What the fuck do you think I’m doing,” I blurt out. “I’m sorry.”

“No, go for it,” Adele suggests. “Sometimes screaming helps you to calm down. I can take it.”

“You’re a good Gamma,” I shout at the top of my lungs, and she quickly looks at me before focusing on the road.

Axel, I need you, I mind-link him but I have no idea if I am doing it right.

Where are you? He replies and I bite back a sob of relief.

On my way to Michelle, I answer.

I’ll meet you there, he reacts.

“I can mind-link,” my voice is back to its normal tone. “And it’s awesome.”

“Are you feeling better?” Adele asks concerned.

“No,” I grunt. “It’s getting worse.”

“We’re here,” Adele stops with screeching tires.

I get out as fast as I can and run to Michelle’s office without waiting for Adele. My heart and head are about to explode and the energy that is surging through me is frightening.

“Liana, what’s wrong?” Michelle jumps up when I burst into her office.

“I need to calm down, now!” I announce and take a seat on the examination bed.

Michelle rushes over to me and her eyes nearly pop out of their sockets when she takes my pulse.

“Your heart rate is through the roof,” she exclaims as she opens a medicine cabinet.

“I’m angry!” I shout and she looks at me in disbelief. “I’m so fucking angry and I can’t calm down.”

“Oh, shit,” she mumbles as she takes my arm.

“What?” I ask brusquely.

“No ... nothing,” she replies. “Lay still, I’m going to administer an injection.”

“Hurry up,” I order and lay down.

“I can mind-link,” I say as I keep my eyes fixated on the ceiling when she pushes the needle into my arm.

“We can discuss it once you wake up,” she replies through stiff lips.

“Wake up?” I look at her confused as I feel my body relaxing.

“I gave you a tranquillizer,” her voice comes to me from a distance. “It was the quickest way to get your heart rate down.”

“Thank you,” I mumble with a thick tongue before darkness consumes me.

## Chapter 88 Fighting For My Mate

# Chapter 88 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Axel POV

“Where is she?” I call out to Adele when I see her waiting in front of Michelle’s office door.

“What happened?”

“She got angry,” Adele replies. “Liana said it feels like she’s about to have a heart attack. Michelle is with her.”

“Do you know why she got so angry?” My guts are in turmoil. I do not think it was a heart attack, I think she was about she shift.

“She and your mother had a fight,” Adele replies uncomfortably. “I don’t know what about, but you could hear them screaming at each other from miles away.”

Her answer is like a punch in the gut. I am not blind to Mother’s attitude towards Liana, but I never thought it would go this far. Secretly I hoped Mom would stop her nonsense when she sees how happy I am.

“Good,” Michelle says as she comes out of her office. “You’re here, we need to talk.”

“How is she?” I ask urgently.

“Asleep,” her answer is abrupt as she looks from me to Adele. “I gave her wolf’s tranquillizer.”

“Are you insane?” I hiss as I fight panic and anguish. “How can you give her that without knowing if it is safe for her and the baby?”

“I don’t need case studies anymore, Alpha,” Michelle stands her ground. “Not after what I’ve just witnessed.”

“We need to talk,” I grunt and push my fingers through my hair.

“That’s what I’ve said,” she replies stiffly.

“Adele,” I look at her. “Guard Liana until we get back.”

“Yes, sir,” she nods, and I follow Michelle to an empty examination room.

“She was about to shift, wasn’t she?” I ask as she closes the door behind us.

“Without a doubt,” she sighs heavily. “There was already fur on her arm when I injected her. Ten more minutes and it would’ve been too late.”

“Are you sure the tranquillizer wouldn’t harm her?” I ask concerned.

“Yes,” she nods. “Its sole purpose is to keep the wolf dormant and human alive. Liana cannot shift, Axel. If she does, your son will die.”

“We cannot possibly keep her sedated for another five months,” I protest eagerly.

“I know that,” she continues calmly. “And we won’t. I’m going to give her a mild sedative that she should take daily. It contains a small amount of Wolfsbane. Her wolf will be calm and suppressed while she can go by her day as usual. It won’t affect her, only her wolf.”

“And our baby?” My heart pulls painfully as I think of the damage that it could do to him. “How’s it going to affect him?”

“It won’t,” she smiles reassuringly. “Thousands of she-wolves use it during pregnancy.”

“Listen,” I exhale deeply. “I know Liana can’t shift, but is this absolutely necessary? Is it really worth risking her wolf and our baby? Liana didn’t lose control, she got angry. This isn’t a daily occurrence.”

“It’s necessary,” Michelle exclaims frustrated. “You didn’t see her, Axel, I did. And I’m telling you, Liana’s wolf reflects her. You know her history better than anybody else. You know her demons and her determination to fight and survive. Her drive to protect, not only herself but others. Every time she feels threatened, or that somebody she cares for is threatened, she’s going to have to fight the shift. You can thank your lucky stars she had enough sense to come to me when she did.”

Speechless I stare at Michelle as her words sink in. Not only has she survived her parents’ neglect, but she also survived Brad and Angela. Still, she is the one who fought me not to kill Angela and Wilson. She is the one who said we should help and support Gwen. She protects everyone. And when she was sick, she did not want to see Michelle, I had to force her. This time she went to Michelle out on her own.

“Axel,” Michelle smiles softly as she looks at me. “Liana’s wolf is an alpha. And not just by your blood, but by her personality. She’s going to be one hell of a Luna.”

“That’s if she survives this,” I croak as I fight the overwhelming emotions of despair and fear.

“Aren’t you listening?” Michelle raises her eyebrows. “Liana’s a survivor. But that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t help her and ease her way. She’s going to make it, Axel. And we’ll support her every step of the way.”

“How long until she wakes up?” I ask eagerly. I need to hold her and reassure myself she is fine.

“At least two more hours,” she replies. “But I’m keeping her overnight for observation.”

“Okay,” I nod. “I’ll be back with my stuff. I’m staying with her.”

“I’ll make the arrangements,” Michelle smiles.

“And I’m not sleeping in a chair,” I warn. “Get a double bed.”

“Axel, you know I can’t ...”

“That wasn’t a request, Michelle,” I grunt brusquely as I leave the room.

I mind-link Adele to stay with Liana before I hurry home.

\*\*

“Mother!” I bellow as I burst through the front door and storm towards Dad’s office. I have no idea what happened and who is at fault, but I am sure she is already stating her case with him.

Mom is sitting on the couch, sobbing her eyes out while Dad comforts her.

“Axel,” Dad looks confused and hurt when he looks at me. “We need to talk, son.”

“Damn right, we should,” I snort as I take a seat opposite them. “What have you done, Mother?”

“Me?” Mother sniffs distraught before she turns to Dad. “See what I mean? She has turned him against me. Me! His mother.”

“Axel,” Dad says patiently. “Please take a moment and listen to her before you decide it’s her fault.”

“Okay,” I nod and plaster a smile on my face. If this is how Mom wants to play it, I will play along. Dad smiles appreciatively at me and Mother’s shoulders relax. “I’m listening.”

“It was horrible, Axel,” tears stream down her face as she looks at me. “Her direct words were, fuck you and your title. She has no respect for me.”

“Yeah,” I chuckle. “That sounds like her.”

“How can you laugh about it?” Father growls. “She has no right talking to your mother like that. I don’t care that she’s your mate and future Luna. There are boundaries.”

“I couldn’t agree more,” my laughter disappears, and I look at Mother in anger. “I also know Liana would only say such a thing when provoked. So, Mother, what have you done?”

“Nothing to deserve such an outburst,” Mother shouts defensively. “I told her she turned you against me and this just proves it. I don’t know what she told you ...”

“Nothing,” I jump up and her tears dry up. “Liana hasn’t told me anything because she’s sedated and in the hospital.”

“Is she okay?” Dad asks concerned. “Why is she sedated?”

“Because she’s weak,” Mother snorts. “Just like I’ve been saying the entire time. One argument and she’s hospitalised. How on earth do you want to run a pack with a weak human?”

“Mother,” I close my eyes and take deep breaths as I open and close my fists to keep calm. “You don’t know what you’re talking about. So, I advise you to keep your mouth shut.”

“Axel,” she gasps.

“Son,” Dad warns softly. “Don’t say things you could regret.”

“Liana has a wolf,” I glare at Mother, and she visibly pales. “If you took a minute to get to know her or show an ounce of interest in her and our baby, you would’ve known that. She’s not in the hospital because she’s weak. She’s there because she’s strong enough to fight the shift and keep our baby alive. So, I’m asking you again, Mother. What did you say to her that made her so angry that she was about to shift? What did you do that nearly cost me my mate and child?”

“That’s rich,” Mother sneers. “Because she can’t control her wolf, I must walk on eggshells in my own home?”

“She did control her wolf!” I yell. “Because if she didn’t, you’d be dead along with my child. Stop avoiding my questions and answer me before I humiliate you and call in the Omegas to report.”

“I told her to leave,” Mother jumps up and her eyes do not waver from mine. “If she really loves you, she will leave the baby and disappear. She doesn’t belong here, and I told her so.”

“You said what?” Dad mumbles before I can find the words.

“I was simply being truthful,” Mother defends herself. “The two of you are so smitten with her, that you can’t see what’s right in front of you.”

“And what’s that, Mom?” My words are a mere whisper.

“A lowlife, trailer trash girl whose parents couldn’t love her,” she snorts in disgust. “And now she found a way to worm herself into wolf royalty.”

“You know what, Mother,” I crank my neck to relieve the tension. “Liana was right. Fuck you and your title.”

“Axel, please,” Dad intervenes. “Your mother made a mistake, but can we please talk about this?”

“I’m not mistaken,” Mother explodes. “You’re blind to the truth.”

“That’s enough,” Dad warns her, and she goes quiet, but I do not miss the challenging pullback of her shoulders. “I’m trying to salvage this and you’re making it worse every time you open your mouth.”

“Don’t bother, Dad,” I smile sadly at him before I look Mother in the eyes. “She’s entitled to her opinions. But so am I. Liana and I won’t be staying here any longer. This is the alpha’s house. Once I take over, my Luna and I will move in. You’re welcome to stay, Dad, but Mother’s no longer welcome in my house or near my mate and child.”

“Axel, please,” Dad begs. “Don’t decide in anger.”

“Father, I respect that you’re fighting for your mate,” I rest my hand on his shoulder, and he suddenly looks ten years older. “And it should be like that. The same way I’m standing up for mine. But until Mother apologizes to Liana, I do not want to see her.”

Dad’s eyes fill with tears, as I turn around and walk away.

## Chapter 89 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Axel POV

Fury rages through me as I pack an overnight bag. I will order Omegas to pack the rest. All I want is to get out of here.

I do not know what has gotten into Mother. She has always meddled in my life. It was annoying but it did not bother me, because she did not actually do anything. It was mostly setting up blind dates and “coincidental” encounters, but this? This is unacceptable. How could she for one second think I would be okay with leaving my mate? Or worse, take our baby from her and then send Liana away?

“Axel,” Dad says hesitantly before he enters. “I’m so sorry, I didn’t know. I’ll talk to her.”

“It’s fine,” I pick up my bag and walk to him. My strong, proud father is now a crooked old man and heartbroken. “This isn’t your fault.”

“Please don’t go,” Dad pleads with emotional eyes.

“I’m sorry, Dad,” I rest my hand on his shoulder. “I cannot stay here. But I’m not shutting you out of our lives. We’ll see you every day, I promise. But with Mom’s attitude, we risk Liana shifting and I’m not taking that chance. I hope you understand.”

“I do,” he inhales deeply and looks up for a moment before turning away. “I would’ve done the same.”

I feel like a monster as I walk to the car. This is not fair towards Dad. He has been nothing but supportive. And he is great with Liana. He embraced and accepted her into his life. But I am not going to make him choose between his wife and son. That is not right, and he deserves better.

Liana POV

I feel groggy and I have the taste of death in my mouth when I open my eyes.

“Welcome back, Luna,” Michelle smiles as she picks up my wrist and takes my pulse. “You gave us quite a stare.”

“I’m sorry,” I mumble and close my eyes. “I tried to control it.”

“Not what I meant,” she chuckles. “You did the right thing coming here. You were on the verge of shifting.”

“What?” I force my eyes open. Last time I checked, there was only a possibility that I would transform.

“Congratulations,” she smiles softly at me. “You’re a wolf.”

“But ... after the birth ... you said ...”

“I know what I speculated,” she takes my hand. “But after today, there’s no more doubt.”

With closed eyes, I listen as Michelle tells me what happened. But I am too dazed and woozy to respond. I want to be happy, but I am also terrified. I do not want to lose Wolfie because I cannot control myself.

“And you’re sure your happy pills will work?” I ask sceptically when she is done talking.

“Guaranteed,” she squeezes my hand.

“Isn’t there like a wolf school or something where they can teach me to keep my wolf under control?” I sigh.

“That will happen after you give birth,” she laughs. “For now, we concentrate on keeping you and the baby alive.”

“Sounds simple enough,” I say sarcastically. Nothing about this pregnancy has been simple.

“We’re moving you to another room,” Michelle ignores me. “You’re staying for the night and Axel insisted on joining.”

“I got one of the good ones,” I smile dreamily.

“Yes, you did,” Michelle laughs. “Don’t try and get up. You’re still recovering from the sedative and might lose your footing.”

“I wasn’t going to,” I mumble. “It’s enough effort to stay awake.”

“Then don’t fight it,” Michelle advises. “Go back to sleep. We’ll take care of you.”

“Thank you,” I murmur and allow the darkness to take me away.

\*\*

It takes my eyes a moment to adjust to the dark room but the second I recognise Axel’s soft snoring next to me, I relax and snuggle closer to him.

“Are you awake?” He mumbles sleepily.



“No,” I whisper smiling. “Go back to sleep, I’m only making myself comfortable.”

“Liar,” he yawns and pulls me closer to my chest. “How are you feeling?”

“Hungry,” I confess.

“In other words, you’re fine,” he laughs as he reaches over and presses a button.

Seconds later a nurse arrives and Axel orders me food before he looks at me.

“I know what my mother said,” his voice is strained. “I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be,” gently I stroke his cheek. “If there’s one thing I know, it’s unreasonable mothers. Besides, I wasn’t nice to her either.”

“I know,” he chuckles. “Did you really say fuck her and her title?”

“Yup,” I sigh and look at him apologetically. “I’m sorry. I was so infuriated; I shouldn’t have said that.”

“That’s exactly what you should’ve said,” he leans over and kisses me. “And I told her so.”

“I think it’s safe to say I suck with mothers,” I sigh theatrically. “But I’ll apologize and ...”

“No,” he cuts me off quickly. “She must apologize to you. Never apologize for standing up for yourself.”

“Love, she’s your mother,” I say patiently as I cup his face. “And we’re living together. It would be best for all if she and I can sort this out. I’m not taking back what I’ve said but I could’ve said it nicer.”

“Believe me, I would’ve said much worse if I were in your shoes,” he smiles as he plays with my hair. “You don’t owe her anything and we’re not going back to that house until she apologizes and adjusts her attitude towards you.”

“And that might never happen,” I exhale deeply and sit up. “We cannot do that to your dad. He doesn’t deserve this, and neither do you. This thing is between me and your mother.”

“Then what do you propose, Liana?” He grunts irritated. “Sweep it under the rug as if nothing happened for the sake of me and my dad? What about next time? What if you can’t control the shift and somebody dies?”

“Even if we do move into my cottage, I must learn to control my wolf,” I reason. “Either that or lock me up in a padded room to shield me from everything that could trigger me until Wolfie is born.”

“That’s why Michelle is prescribing those pills,” he argues. “So that you don’t lose control.”

“And by that argument, I can face your mother,” I say irritated.

“What do you want me to do, Liana?” Axel grunts and gets out of bed. “I’m doing my best here but nothing I suggest is good enough for you.”

“Okay, wow,” I hold my hands up defensively. “This conversation is turning into a huge misunderstanding. I know your decisions are in my best interest and I’m trying to do the same for you, Axel.”

He sighs defeated and sits down on the bed and I climb onto his lap.

“This isn’t supposed to be about me, it’s supposed to be about us,” I wrap my arms around his neck. “My needs are not supposed to be all that matters. Your mother doesn’t like me, but she loves you. Sure, she’s a meddler and in her distorted way, she wants to help you. In her mind, she is protecting her son from the wrong person. Can you honestly say that you wouldn’t do the same for Wolfie one day if he came home with a gold digger?”

“But you’re not like that,” he grunts and buries his face in my neck.

“And she doesn’t know it,” I stroke his hair. “Because she doesn’t want to, and neither of us can change that. As much as I want to kick your mother, she’s still your mother and your father’s mate. Can you imagine how torn he is?”

“What are we supposed to do then, wise ass?” His arms tighten around my waist. “Because I can’t see a solution without cutting her out of our lives.”

“As much satisfaction it would give me to give her the boot, nobody wins,” I say sympathetically. “Not her, not you, not your dad and least of all Wolfie. She’s his only grandmother. Your mother and I must find a way to coexist in peace. Let me talk to her, okay?”

“What if you get angry and shift?” He asks concerned.

“I’ll take an extra pill,” I smile. “And I promise I’ll remove myself from the situation before it gets too bad.”

“The only way you’re doing this is if I’m with you,” he insists.

“You’re more than welcome,” I shrug. “I’m not hiding anything.”

“Why?” He looks at me perplexed. “Why are you so insistent to get along with her? I get you’re doing this for me and Wolfie, but we’ll be fine without her.”

“Because I know how it feels,” I smile sadly. “Separating the heart and the mind isn’t easy, Axel. I know it’s better without my parents, but I still miss them. My dad was a great dad. Sometimes I

miss him so much that my heart wants to explode. Until Leon's death, he was always there for me. He always took my side. It's been months and I still cannot comprehend what exactly happened. I expected it from Mom, but not from him. I'm dying to tell him he's going to be a grandfather. He would've loved it. The loss of my mother isn't that great. She is toxic and a narcissist. I know it, but my heart yearns for her love because she is my mother. Nothing can change that. Not even the cold hard truth that she's incapable of loving me. I can't go back to them, Axel. I can't fix them. My mind knows it, but my heart is mourning. And I don't want that for you."

"You're saying all of this but still you're willing to open yourself to rejection from my mother," he sighs. "She's not worth it."

"This is different," I kiss him softly. "I don't crave your mother's love or acceptance. She didn't hurt my feelings today, Axel. She infuriated me because of what she's doing to you and there's no fucking way she's going to pull those stunts with our child. Respectfully."

"Michelle is right about you," his fingers tangle into my hair and he pulls my lips closer. "You're going to be one hell of a Luna."

Chapter 90 Confronting Mother

## Chapter 90 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

"That was the most pleasant hospital stay ever," I grin as Axel parks in front of the mansion, but he does not laugh at my silly joke.

"Liana," his voice is thick with concern as he looks at me. "Are you sure about this? We can simply go inside, get our stuff and go. We don't have to talk to Mother."

"I'm doing this," I lean over and kiss him. "Your mother is not coming between me and decorating the nursery. But seriously, somebody must talk sense into her before it's too late."

"You know I choose you over her?" Axel looks at me intensely.

"I do," I place my palm against his cheek. "But you shouldn't have to."

Quickly I get out of the car before he can continue to debate this. I know what I am doing, and why I am doing it. Yes, she grossly overstepped, and this is between her and me, but this also is not about us. This is about Axel and his dad. They will have to live with the consequences, and I

will not be responsible for their sorrow. It does not matter how much he loves me, there will be a day when he will miss his mother.

“One more thing,” I take Axel’s hand as we walk to the front door. “I must warn you that I’m going to talk to your mother very directly. She’s not going to like it.”

“I’ll stay out of it and let you do your thing,” he squeezes my hand.

\*\*

Thanks to Michelle’s pills, I am calm and relaxed when we find Axel’s mother reading in the office. She gives us a bored look before she puts the book down.

“Are you here to apologize or say goodbye?” She asks stiffly.

“Neither,” I reply politely and take a seat opposite her. “We’re going to talk.”

“How nice,” she sneers. “And I see you brought my son along as what? Backup? Or are you going to team up against me?”

“I’m security,” Axel grins and walks to the cabinet to pour himself a drink. “I’ll be the one saving your ass when she wants to rip you apart.”

“Lucky me,” she rolls her eyes. “But let me save you both the trouble and tell you I’m not interested in what you have to say. Other than an apology.”

“Okay,” I smile sweetly. “I’m sorry you’re such a narrowminded and self-righteous bitch.”

“There you go again,” she gasps. “Insulting me. Do you have no respect?”

“Oh, for fuck’s sake,” I grunt irritated. “Cut the crap, Mrs Silvermann and drop the drama.”

“I’m not dramatic,” she protests. “I simply don’t care for your banality.”

“Stop it,” my words are harsh and loud. I am so over her attitude. “Just stop it. Stop with the indignant gasps and the theatrical gripping of your heart. It’s pretentious and false and nobody’s buying it. You can’t claim higher ground after you told me to abandon my mate and baby.”

Axel growls low and deep. Startled I look at him. With excess force, he puts the glass down and crosses his arms in front of his chest.

“Sorry,” he grunts with his eyes fixated on his mother. “But I don’t think I’ll ever be able to forgive her for that.”

“Is that why you’re here?” She narrows her eyes. “To tell me what a terrible person I am?”

“No,” I say sharply, and she looks at me. “You can figure that part out on your own time. I’m here to tell you that I’m not going anywhere, nor will we be leaving the mansion.”

“Now I get it,” she smirks. “You’re desperate for our wealth and the cottage isn’t good enough for you anymore.”

“I don’t own anything and yet I have the world,” I smile as I look at Axel. “I have a truly great man’s love and soon we’re going to welcome our perfect boy.”

“And I’m being accused of theatrics,” she snorts.

“Here’s the thing, Mrs Silvermann ...”

“Luna,” she interrupts me sharply.

“Mrs Silvermann,” I insist and lean forward in my chair. She is behaving like a spoiled child and not a Luna. “I have survived my mother and you’re a minor in comparison. You don’t scare or intimidate me. I simply don’t care enough for you that it matters what you think of me. There’s nothing you can do to make me leave. You’re of the opinion that I’m after Axel for status and money and you’re sadly mistaken. Axel knew I was his mate long before I did. I fought it, but he waited patiently for me to be ready to accept him. I didn’t know what unconditional love was until I met him. He’s the one that taught me I’m worthy of love. His love. Now that I found him, I’m never letting him go. He is my life and I’m committed to him.”

She looks at me with a stoic face as I stand up.

“Now you know how I feel about your son,” I look her dead in the eyes. “And that should be enough for any mother. You don’t like me and it’s fine. I don’t care. Honestly, you haven’t given me much of a reason to like you either. However, we do have one thing in common, we love Axel. And you and I will do the grownup thing and tolerate each other for his sake. And for Grant’s and this innocent little baby.”

“Such a heartwarming speech,” she sneers. “If ...”

“I’m not done,” I cut her off brusquely. “You and I will stay out of each other’s way. But when our paths do cross, we will be civil and even friendly towards each other. Because we have the same goal – to keep this family together and happy. You have no say in this, but you do have a choice. Fight it and end up alone and bitter or embrace it and be part of our lives. If you can’t do that, then you’re not the loving mother and strong Luna you claim to be. Don’t let a human outshine you, do better. Be better.”

I do not wait for her reply as I turn around and walk away.

“What she said,” Axel grunts as he follows me.

Axel POV

“Are you okay?” I whisper as Liana and I walk up the stairs to our room. She seems calm enough, but I am not. It will take me a while to forgive Mother for what she has done.

“Yes, I am,” she smiles brightly at me as she puts her arms around my waist. “I’m annoyed but not angry.”

“Maybe I should take some of those pills,” I grunt, and she laughs softly.

My heart swells with pride as I watch her walk into our room. Last night when she said she wanted to talk to Mother, I thought she was going to apologize. That she was going to make herself small again to fit in. And I am thrilled that I was wrong. Not only did she make it abundantly clear that she cannot be manipulated, but she also challenged Mother. She has no choice but to go along with Liana or she will be the lesser Luna, and she will hate that.

“You did well,” I take her by the wrist and pull her into my embrace. “I’m proud of you.”

“I can’t take all the credit,” she drapes her arms around my neck. “Your love and support gave me the courage to do it.”

It is silent in the room as I kiss her long and tenderly.

“I need a favour,” I sigh reluctantly as she pulls away. The very last thing I want to do now is talk business after her victory.

“I’m dying to say anything,” Liana looks at me suspiciously. “But with that look on your face, I’m afraid to say yes.”

“It’s not that big of a deal,” I say as I sit down in a chair.

“I’m listening,” she walks to the mini fridge and takes out a juice.

“I know you asked to go shopping tomorrow, but I can’t,” I say.

“That’s it?” She frowns as she takes a seat opposite me. “That’s not the end of the world or a favour.”

“Dad and I are going to see Jack,” I watch her hands still for a moment before she continues drinking. “And I want you to spend the day with Nina until I get back.”

“Are you going to talk to him about that stunt he pulled with Austin?” She asks cautiously.

“Yes,” I nod. “But Jack doesn’t know I’m coming. I doubt that he would see me. According to him, it’s a social visit from my dad. That’s also the reason why we’re doing it during the weekend.”

“Makes sense,” she says thoughtfully and puts the juice down. “Do you think you’ll see Angela?”

“Probable,” I shrug. “But you shouldn’t worry about her.”

“I’m not,” she snorts. “Your day is only going to be so much more messed up if she’s around.”

“You’re right,” I exhale deeply. “But I have no choice. Jack must know that I won’t tolerate his behaviour.”

“So, why am I going to Nina’s?” She looks at me curiously. “Not that I mind, we have a dress fitting anyway, but what’s your reason?”

“I don’t want to leave you alone with Mother,” I blurt out the truth.

“Axel,” she looks lovingly at me. “I’ll be fine. And Adele will be glued to my side. You have nothing to worry about.”

“I know,” I say hastily as I stand up and kneel in front of her. “You’ve proven that. I’m asking for myself, Liana. Tomorrow isn’t going to be pleasant, and I don’t want to wonder if you’re okay. Even if you can fend for yourself, I feel the need to be here and support you.”

“Okay,” she cups my face and kisses me softly. “I’ll gladly do it for you.”

“Thank you,” I stand up and pull her into my arms. “That will put my mind at ease.”

“Just come back safely,” she looks at me with her big, beautiful eyes.

“Always,” I smile before kissing her.