

## Chapter 41 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna

I was sitting in my office when Casper came to me in a hurry. He seemed like he had rushed there from home.

I had asked him to take the week off because his mate had given birth, so I knew whatever might have brought him to my office was important.

“Envoys have been sent from the north and have just passed Hill Valley; they are heading here, Alpha. They say the Lord sent them,” Casper said, sounding nervous, and I knew why.

We had waited for the Wolf Lord to bring his people since he conquered us and took most of our women as trophies. I thought he had changed his mind when time passed, and nothing happened, but I was wrong.

“Are they officers?” I asked Casper, and he nodded.

“Marlo said they were battle ready. It seems they believe we might revolt to whatever news they bring, and they are willing to use force if necessary.” Casper said, sounding worried, and I wondered what more Volkov wanted from me. He had taken everything from me. What more did he want?

I sat in my office and told Casper to go home, just in case it turned into a fight, so he would not be caught up in it.

“I won’t leave you to face those barbarians alone. What Kyle did to us is unforgivable because he was the one that made that man pick interest in the east,” he said, complaining bitterly. We sat worried about what might befall us.

Finally, the men arrived, and I offered them seats in my office. They did not seem like they wanted to stay, so I did not bother to ask questions; I just let them get straight to the point.

“Alpha Albert, My name is Bryce Golubev, a lead enforcer for the northern council, appointed and sanctioned by lord Volkov himself,” He said with pride. I nodded at him and greeted him.

I wondered why a head enforcer would be sent to me, and it bothered me.

“We are here, under the order of the council by lord Volkov, to collect on the eastern developmental tax,” He said. I frowned at him, not knowing what the hell he was talking about.

“What taxes?” I asked the man, and he brought out a document with the Wolf Lord’s seal.

“Why are we to pay these taxes?” I asked him.

“This tax is for the regions under the Wolf Lord. This region has been conquered by the north,” he said and stood up.

“I am not here to chit-chat, alpha Albert. I will be back in a week to collect. Please make what is necessarily available.” He said, and they excused themselves.

I felt insulted.

Sylvester was testing my patience. I might be passive and dislike war, but this is too much. First, he takes my wife from me and now this. There was just so much a man could take.

I wasn’t over losing my Luna; now he was doing this. How far to the ground did he want to beat me? Devin was right about this man being a bully.

“What should we do?” Casper asked me, and I sighed.

“Call a meeting. I think it is time to have a serious talk with our people and know what we need to do. There is no way I am paying development taxes to the north.” I said, and he sighed.

“I suggest you contact the Wolf Lord, Alpha, before making hasty decisions. I would not want us to make a mistake,” he said, and I frowned at my beta,

“He did not attack us when Devin and Max attacked his home. This might be the council abusing its power. Let us not be hasty. I think you should place a call to him directly this time instead of sending a letter. We can then decide what to do based on his response.” Casper said, and I realised he was right.

I smacked my head for being hasty. Because I wasn’t over the fact that he was with my wife troubled me and made me quick to react.

“Very well, get me his office number. I will call him tomorrow and make my enquiries directly from him or anyone in charge,” I told Casper, and he nodded.

One thing I was grateful for was that Enforcer Bryce Golubev did not decide to attack me. It would have been gory. The man looked like he ate silver for breakfast, lunch and dinner. I wondered what they gave the northern warriors.

I returned home to find Amanda cleaning Tamia’s room. I was livid.

“What the fuck are you doing in there?” I yelled at her. I was angry and rushed to the room, then entered the closet to be sure Tamia’s scent lingered.

I left the room, and she was in tears, her hand shaking.

“I only wanted to clean the room and air the space” She explained, and I did not care.

“Didn’t I warn you not to go in there? Why did you do it?” I said, closing the door and locking it with a key.

“That will always be Tamia’s room, and you are not allowed in there,” I said, and she began to weep.

“She isn’t coming back, Leo. I am sure she has moved on with her life, so why can’t we move on with ours?” She yelled back at me, and I shook my head.

“If she didn’t give herself up, we wouldn’t have a life to move on with,” I said and sat on the room couch.

“I hate you, Leo! All you have done since they took Tamia away was mope about. You have been distant. It isn’t my fault that they took her! It isn’t my fault that we are fated!” She said, and I was angry.

“But you lied to your father so he could force you into my home. I hurt my wife in ways I can never forgive myself,” I said, and she shook her head.

“Do not blame me for hurting Tamia, Leo. You should have rejected me instead of making out with me on the balcony. You should have shown her how much you loved her and rejected me. Instead, you held out. I had to force my way in because your lack of rejection gave me hope. It made me believe

you wanted me, and she was the reason you were reluctant. Call it what you want. Your actions gave me hope to fight for what is mine. So don't blame me for her sadness or what you did to her. That was you, Leo. That was all you, and I refuse to pay for your crimes." She said and wiped away her tears.

"And whether I was here or not, the north would have taken her away. You stood no chance against those soldiers," She pointed out.

I shook my head, tears streaming down my face at the depth of truth she had spoken about me not having the courage to reject her. She was right. I caused it all.

My reluctance gave her hope and ruined my marriage. Fate didn't force me to accept Amanda; I did it of my own volition.

"We would have stood a chance if she fought beside me, but she gave up on us the moment she found out you were pregnant," I said; she began to laugh, tears still streaming down her cheeks.

"I did not climb on top of myself to get me pregnant. You did. So stop making me out to be the bad guy. Other than the lie I told against her, which you did not believe, I did absolutely nothing wrong. Tamia had left you before she left physically, and you know it, so don't blame me for it. I did not ever plan to live in another woman's shadow, but that was what fate mapped out for me. I am sorry for trying to make something beautiful out of the misery fate brought upon us," She said and wiped away her tears.

"I wasn't supposed to stay in the east. I was supposed to visit my father and return to where I came from, on Kanes Island in the north. I had a job and a good life there. Everything went away the moment I set my eyes on you, Leo, so stop making it seem like I was the one that did something bad here," She said in tears and took the mop stick away.

I sat down on the couch and bowed my head in shame. I was ashamed of myself.

Everything that Amanda said was true. I was selfish and weak. I only thought of myself and believed I could eat my cake and have it.

I wanted to keep my wife and my fated. I thought I was smart. I broke my promises to Tamia and expected her to be okay with it.

All that Amanda said was right, and my eyes welled up in tears. It was a joke.

No matter how hard I tried to be happy, I couldn't be.

Amanda wasn't a bad Luna. She was doing a good job, but to me, it would never be enough because even with the mate bond, I just didn't love her the way I loved Tamia.

Tamia was remarkable, and I was worried about what was happening to her. She wasn't harem material; would Sylvester Volkov see that and give her the honour she deserved? I thought of my Tamia, and all I could do was shed tears.

I decided I would sleep in the living room on the couch, and for the first time, Amanda did not come to trouble me. I knew it was for the best. We both needed the space.

Morning came, and I went to the office without checking on my mate. I knew it was wrong and planned to make it up to her, but I needed to deal with the tax situation quickly before Enforcer Bryce changed his mind and returned to collect sooner than he had announced.

I got to the office and dialled the number Casper had sent me.

A deep voice answered.

"Who is this?" The man asked, and I swallowed before speaking.

"This is Alpha Leonardo Albert from the east. I would like to speak to The Lord or beta on an important matter, please," I said politely, and the man waited before answering.

"They went to a dinner party last night and are yet to return. I will try to patch you through to the beta," he said, and I sighed, glad that I would be speaking to someone up there. The beta was the second most powerful man in our world, so it was okay.

I waited almost two minutes before I heard another deep voice on the phone.

"To what do we owe this call, Alpha Leo?" The beta sounded a bit jovial, giving me the guts to tell him what I wanted to say.

“An Enforcer by the name Bryce Golubev arrived with a council order signed by the Lord to collect on development tax; he promised he would be back to collect in a week. He wasn’t friendly about it, either.

I want to know why we have been asked to pay this tax?” I asked, and I heard the man curse angrily in the background. Had I stirred the hornet’s nest.

“Sorry about the mix-up, Alpha. The Lord did not sanction any tax; I will see to the matter,” he said, and I exhaled. I was so glad I did not spring into action and listened to my beta.

“Will that be all? I am actually at a breakfast party and shouldn’t be receiving calls,” he said, and I thanked him.

“That will be all, sir. Thank you for your time,” I said and heard people fighting.

It made me wonder why people would fight at a breakfast party. Before he hung up, I heard a voice that sounded like Tamia’s, but it was too faint for me to believe she was the one.

I sat on my couch and relaxed mind. There was really no need for panic.

I began to wonder what was really going on in the north.

I also remembered the village Devin told me of.

Could it be that someone high up there was trying to stir up shit against the Wolf Lord? I knew I needed to be careful henceforth. Things weren’t as they seemed.

~Tamia~

I leaned into Sylvester in the Limo, and he held me tight. Linda was in Theodore’s arms, and we rode in silence.

I wondered why Vino would allow Larry to bring their exes there. Was he trying to ruin our relationship? Then again, I also knew that the council members bullied him, so he must not have had a say. The man needed to grow a pair, or people would keep walking all over him.

We arrived at the Volkov estate, and Sylvester and I went straight to our bedroom.

Although we had showered at Vino's mansion, I needed to wash the place off my body. I entered the shower and turned on the water.

Sylvester joined me, already naked.

"How are you feeling?" He finally asked, and I nodded.

"I am sorry I acted the way I did.." He started, and I pulled him closer to my body. I looked up so I could see his eyes.

"You didn't do anything wrong. I am impressed by your self-control. You are lord, you could have arrested them, and no one would question you." I said and rested my head against his chest.

"I am proud of you," I said, and he wrapped his arms around me and exhaled. I felt sorry for him that his brother would work against him like this.

We left the shower and got dressed. He wanted to go to his office immediately, and I knew it was because of the seal and his signature.

"Sylvester, may I bring up a suggestion?" I told him on his way out, and he nodded.

"I do not know who is doing this to you, but the person either lives in this estate or has people in this estate. I suggest you have a special ink made for your signature." I said, and he smiled at me, but I wasn't done talking yet.

So I walked up to him and placed my hand on his chest.

"I know I am yet to be luna, and I do not know the laws of the north, but I will like you to allow me to help you look into the matter secretly. I might find out things," I requested, hoping he would agree.

I remembered how I used to help Leo with investigations in the east. Although nothing serious like this happened, I knew how it was done.

"Of course, Luna," he said and bent to kiss me on the lips. Then he folded his hands and raised his eyebrow.

"Let's say you were to do this, where will you begin?" he asked, and I giggled.

"Follow the trail of the so-called tax increment document from who delivered it to where they received it, all the way back to its origin. If I could trace it back

to its source, we would find the culprit or the accomplice. We might have to go to the west undercover to get the complete picture. I also feel it was dishonest for Alpha Brighton not to tell you about the attack himself. We should look into that, too," I said and sighed.

"I have a long list," I told him, and he looked at me in awe.

"Wow, Tamia," he said, sounding genuinely impressed.

"Would you mind working with me, Marcel and Theodore on this?" He asked, and I smiled at him.

"I will think about it," I said, and he smiled and gently brushed my cheek with his hands.

"Try and get some rest," he told me and walked away.

I wasn't planning to rest. I was planning to make sure he had no opposition during the hearing at the council hall the next day, so as soon as he left, I searched for Stephanie.

I stood at her door and knocked.

"It's open," I heard her voice, and I walked in.

She was relaxing on a couch with a glass of wine in her hand. She looked in my direction and smiled.

"I was wondering when you would come to see me, Tamia," She said and motioned me to join her on the couch. She tried to pour me a glass of wine, but I declined. It was a bit too early to drink.

"How was the party?" She asked, and I nodded.

"It was fine until Dominic decided to embarrass Sylvester this morning," I said, and she frowned at me.

I looked at her with a straight face.

"Who is Larry to Dominic?" I asked her, and she frowned at me.

"Why are you asking me this?" She said, and I sighed.



“Because I do not understand why Dominic will always help Larry work against Sylvester. Today he accused Sylvester of something unscrupulous in the eyes of all the elites,” I said, and she was stunned.

“He accused Sylvester of increasing taxes for poor people, and sending soldiers to attack people that couldn’t pay. Who does that to his blood? Does he not know that the entire Volkov family will lose the Lordship if Sylvester falls?” I asked her, and she was still stunned.

“Dominic is your son, and Sylvester told me he is here because of you. I can overlook many things but not when it would hurt my mate’s reputation. I do not like playing dirty, but you need to call your son to order. I won’t take it easy if I find out he is setting Sylvester up,” I said.

Her eyes showed fear. Stephanie was a woman like me, and she knew what women were capable of. I did not need to be Luna to do damage. Tears were streaming down her face, and she hugged me.

“I appreciate your love for Sylvester. I promise to talk some sense into Dominic, but please don’t write him off, Tamia. I know you will be luna soon; I do not want him to be in your bad books,” She said and broke the hug.

“Dominic was his father’s favourite, and Larry was one of Maurice’s good friends. They are just mad that Sylvester did not get justice for Maurice. Even I am mad about it,” She explained, and I shook my head.

“It gives him no right to do what he did this morning. On no account should he side with an outsider against his brother. Sylvester has been summoned for questioning by the council tomorrow. I want you to stop Dominic from attending and complicating matters for Sylvester. Do you think you can do that?” I asked her, and she nodded. Wiping away her tears.

“Thank you,” I said with a straight face.

“Now, will you drink that wine?” She asked, and I smiled at her and shook my head.

I did not feel like drinking, and I explained it to her.

She told me a few things about her life with her husband, and I was horrified to learn of the abuse he subjected her to.

The most baffling thing about it was that she didn't see it that way, so I held my peace and did not say anything about it.

I returned to the bedroom in the evening and found Sylvester on the bed staring at the ceiling. He sat up and smiled, but his smile could not fool me. I knew he was troubled.

I went to him, and he pulled me close for a kiss.

"I can feel your anxiety, Sylvester. You need to tell me the real implications of tomorrow's questioning." I told him, and he sighed.

He placed his hands in mine and smiled at me.

"If I fail tomorrow, Dominic will get what he wants, and I will be asked to step down. Marcel and Theodore are willing to step down with me." He said and sighed.

"I do not want it to come to that, but I do not know what they have. If people are plotting against me, then I do not know the angle they will pick," he said, and I rubbed his back.

"You need to be calm, Sylvester," I said and squeezed his hand gently.

"You are innocent in this, and we will find the culprit," I told him, and he nodded.

We left for the council hall in the morning. Marcel and Theodore were in their jeeps, and we joined them in ours. We left the estate in convoy.

Sylvester was a lot calmer after we made love in the shower. I hoped Stephanie kept her promise and did not allow Dominic to come for the hearing; it would leave Larry on his own without support.

Only Dominic could challenge Sylvester; with him out of the way, the questioning would be straightforward. The good part was it could only be done once.

We arrived at the council and were taken to the box where we sat the last time, and it seemed everyone was waiting for us to arrive.

"Welcome, Lord Volkov; we are honoured to have you grace us with your presence," A woman said, standing up.

I looked at Larry, and he was quiet. I looked at Dominic's Box, and it was empty. I was glad he did not come.

"With all due respect, your eminence, this is just a hearing; there is no need to bring your fiance. When she is luna, she can partake in these meetings," The woman said with a straight face.

"Pamela Reeves, my Luna is with me based on my request, and she will also be observing and asking questions based on my request. It will be in your best interest to treat her with the appropriate respect. Bear in mind that I won't be changing my mind where she is concerned. So this council might as well get used to treating her as the Lady of the north, and my Luna," he said calmly, and she nodded.

"It has come to our attention that you ordered soldiers to attack the Brighton Pack in the western borders because they could not pay up. You know these people are farmers and can't afford the development tax. Yet, you ordered an attack on them," She said, lifting a paper that I was sure had Sylvester's signature on it.

"Your attack forced them to seek refuge with Bane," She said and sat down.

Sylvester wanted to respond, but I stopped him. Instead, I stood up, pissed off by what the council was trying to do.

"I would like to ask some questions before Lord Volkov answers your accusations," I said, and they murmured.

"Let her speak," Vino said, and I smiled at him.

"Thank you, council leader," I said, appreciating Vino.

"I was of the notion this was a question and answer situation, not a judgemental situation," I said, and they murmured.

"I would prefer you use the word alleged when stating the crimes committed, Councilwoman Pamela," I said, and they were silent.

"First off, I want to ask this council if they questioned the officers that led this battle?" I asked, and they were silent.

“Where did the order come from? Who delivered this letter, and where did they get it from? Who gave it to them? Who collected it from the lord directly? Kindly answer these questions, and his eminence would gladly answer yours,” I said calmly, and they began to murmur.

“I am not trying to create trouble here. I just want to know that that piece of paper came from my mate. Once you can prove it came from him, then we can proceed. Otherwise, I will ask this council to search for who will benefit from this action, who will want to frame his Lordship and who is likely to succeed,” I said and sat down.

“Brilliant, Tamia,” I heard Marcel’s voice through the mind link.

“Good job,” I heard Theodore’s voice, and Sylvester squeezed my thigh gently.

“Where is Dominic Volkov?” Larry asked, and no one answered.

“What have you done to your brother?” Larry asked Sylvester in anger.

“I will not overlook your disrespect, old man!” Sylvester warned him, and he calmed down.

“I am beginning to suspect you and Dominic did this. If I find out you had a hand in this, I will end you myself. It is a promise, council man Larry,” Sylvester said, and Vino stood up.

“I believe we owe his Lordship an apology for summoning him for a question and answer without doing our research,” Vino said and bowed to Sylvester. Clearly, he wasn’t in support of summoning Sylvester but had to as required of him by the council.

“I apologise on behalf of the council and promise we won’t repeat this mistake. Aid will be sent to Brighton, and he will be informed that you had no hand in this, your eminence,” he said, and Sylvester told him it was alright.

As much as I was glad about the turn of events, it was best for us to reach out to Brighton and do the needful. I did not trust the council. Only Vino Lawrence seemed to be on Sylvester’s side, and we did not know him well enough.

They discussed other matters that involved Bane building an army to come to the north. People wanted Sylvester to send Marcel or Theodore to lead a charge to neutralise him and Leo.

I knew they included Leo because of me.

I knew they were testing my loyalty because Leo hadn't done anything wrong.

I had to hold my tongue and not speak so they do not claim that I was still loyal to my ex-husband and was only using Sylvester.

The emphasis on attacking Leo was so much that Theodore and Marcel caught on and had to shut them up.

One thing we all knew was that Leo was a very peaceful man and would never do anything to hurt or attack anyone. At the end of the hearing, I concluded that we needed to investigate the council

thoroughly.

~Sylvester~

What Tamia did blew me away. She fearlessly came to my defence and put the council in their place. I was blessed.

I looked at Dominic's box and was grateful that he did not come. The hearing would have been difficult if he had shown up. Of everyone, he was the only one that could disrespect me without consequence. It wasn't that I could not deal with him, but I had to respect my mother and not hurt her by hurting him.

Larry seemed disappointed, and I figured he must have planned something with Dominic. I needed to investigate that man. Even though we all knew Dominic did not have the smarts to pull off something of that magnitude, I could not say the same for Larry.

Tamia was right when she asked them if they traced the documents. As much as they wanted to end the conversation after emphasising attacking Bane and Leo, I had to decline their request to end the meeting.

Pamela clamoured on Leo's issue deliberately. She said many things about the eastern alpha while watching Tamia's reaction. I knew what she was trying to prove, but I knew Tamia belonged to me and her heart beat only for me.

“Have you all finished?” I finally spoke, and there was silence. Then Vino stood to speak.

“Yes, we have, your lordship, and we ask to close the meeting,” he said, and I shook my head.

“Today isn’t a silent day for me,” I said, and Vino sat back in his chair.

I looked at Pamela.

“What did you say were alpha Leonardo Albert’s crimes?” I asked her.

“Word has it that he has teamed up with Bane to help build his army, of which they plan on marching up north to overthrow you and take over,” she said with conviction, and I smiled.

“And where did you hear this?” I asked, and she did not look so confident again.

“We must keep our ears to the ground and listen for harmful news that can bring the downfall of our structure.” She explained, and I smiled.

” In other words, it is a rumour,” I said, and she was silent.

“And you ask me to launch an attack against this alpha based on a rumour that has no origin or facts,” I said so she could understand the stupidity of her request.

“I also did not miss that you kept looking at my mate while you made that request,” I said and smiled.

“Let this be the last time this council will try to use Tamia’s ex-husband as bait. It is low and disrespectful. It is stupid and baseless, and I am highly disappointed in all of you.” I said.

“You all called me here for a question and answer session based on baseless allegations. I would have been impressed if you had done your work, but you didn’t.” I said.

“While you are all trying to create an issue out of nothing, there is a serious matter pending that we are yet to discuss,” I said, and they were attentive.

“Who sent Enforcer Bryce Golubev yesterday morning to the east to demand development taxes from Alpha Leonardo? This was done after I told Vino I did not pass that order. Why wasn’t he called back? Why did he threaten the alpha?” I asked, and they were silent.

Tamia was in shock.

I should have told her when she returned to our room yesterday evening, but I was too angry about what the council was doing and worried about how far they were willing to go to say anything to her.

It is a shame that Leo and I can never be friends because I took away his price possession, but I respected the alpha for reaching out instead of reacting.

“I need an answer,” I said, and Councilwoman Joan Clayman stood to speak.

“With all due respect, your Lordship, how did you come about this?” she asked, and I smiled.

“Alpha Leo had the heart to reach out to us and enquire about the so-called development tax. I am glad he did not revolt.” I said and refused to change the topic.

“I asked a question,” I reminded them, and no one spoke, so I looked at Marcel, and he nodded.

Kappa William ushered in the enforcer, and the council members were silent.

“Bryce,” Marcel said, and the man knelt and kept his head bowed. He wasn’t allowed to look into our eyes, and he knew his place.

” Who gave you the order to go to the east yesterday morning? Who paid for your flight and commissioned the mission?” Marcel asked, and he did not speak.

“If you choose to hold your tongue, you and your family will be tried for treason. Delivering false news in the name of the Wolf lord is treasonous,” Marcel warned him, and the man bowed his head.

"I honestly thought the order was genuine. Lord Dominic gave it to me," he said, and people began to murmur.

"When did he give this to you?" I asked him.

"Three nights ago. It had your seal on. I believed it was from your office," he said, and people began to murmur.

I could hear outrage and disappointment in the room.

I was wondering if that was why Dominic did not show up. Did he know we would find out the truth? Was he somehow on the run?

"We need to hunt Dominic down and arrest him. He has a lot of explaining to do." I linked Marcel and Theodore, and they told me they were already on it.

"Dominic should be arrested," Pamela said, and I noticed Vino was shocked and silent.

"I looked at Larry, who was equally shocked, but I could not believe his reaction. They could have planned it. He could have as well been the mastermind and planned it with my brother to be the fall guy.

I looked at him and let my eyes linger on his.

"I have no hand in this, Lord Volkov," he said, and I smiled.

"That is not for you to decide." I said, and he widened his eyes.

Kappa William and his men moved to arrest Larry.

"You are guilty until proven innocent. Whatever Dominic does reflects on you." I said, and most of the council members disagreed with me, but I did not care; I was lord after all, it was time to let them know who was truly in charge.

"With that out of the way, I want to use this opportunity to state that the east is a sovereign region, and we will not tax their alpha. I might be the Wolf lord, but the alpha of the east rules the east, likewise that

of the south. As long as they do not declare war, I will not move to attack them. I do not have lives to waste or homes and families to ruin. War might give my seat and this council money and power, expand our lands and strengthen our reach and hold, but it also ruins lives, destroys homes and



brings pain and sorrow to people. My father did much of that in his time, creating enemies for the north and my family's name. His actions led to his death and birthed grudges from all over. I am not here to continue in his footsteps. My time is for healing, peace and prosperity. None of you should try to force my hand against anyone, secretly or openly, or I will see that action as treason," I said, and they were silent.

I had said my peace and decided to end the discussion.

Vino ended the discussion, and we left.

Tamia sat in the passenger's seat of the Jeep, a bit silent. It was clear that she was baffled about something. I decided to wait until we got home so we could discuss it.

I also wanted to reward her for her bravery and for coming to my aid.

She was the best.

Every day that passes, I fight with myself and Knight not to go against tradition and claim her. We had two more months to go, but it felt like forever. I wanted to be one with her now.

I touched her lap, and she smiled at me.

"I am glad that went well," she said, and I nodded.

"Thanks to you, darling; you deserve a reward for it," I said and ran my palm up her thigh. She opened her legs to grant me access, and I could smell her arousal. Knight growled in my head, and I swayed.

"Focus," she teased, and I looked at the car in front of us, contemplating if I should park and take her. I decided against it last minute and overtook Theodore and Marcel's Jeep. I needed to get home in a hurry.

I parked at the estate's entrance and made Tamia alight the Jeep so we could rush in.

I did not speak to anyone, and it made her giggle.

I entered our bedroom and crashed my lips against hers.

I was about to get into it when someone began to bang on my door.

“Sylvester, how could you!” I heard my mother’s voice, and I knew why.

I grumbled, let Tamia down and zipped up my fly.

She giggled, and I was slightly annoyed that my mother would bang on my door the way she did.

I opened the door, and she walked into my bedroom and slapped me.

There was silence in the room.

I could tolerate her doing that, but I had warned her against hitting me. She tried to send another one, and I held her hand and roared at her. Tamia held me from behind to calm down. Tears were streaming down my mother’s face.

” Why did you arrest your brother? I did as Tamia instructed and stopped him from attending the hearing; why lock him up?” she said, and I turned to look at Tamia.

I was surprised that she arranged it without telling me. She knew, and her eyes pleaded with me.

“Did you instruct my mother to keep Dominic?” I asked Tamia, and she nodded.

“I did. I did it for you. You were worried about him and Larry working against you. He was the only one that could challenge you, so I asked her to stop him from attending..” She said, and I knew she meant well. However wrong her actions were, I knew she meant well; it showed in her eyes.

Even though I was mad about the implications of her actions, I could not scold her in the presence of anyone. I turned back to my mother.

“You threatened to deal with my son, Tamia, so I held him back. Why then this? The soldiers dragged him out of his room in silver chains like a criminal,” she said in tears, and I did not know what to say. I looked at Tamia, and she could not speak, which meant that conversation had taken place.

” Dominic forged my signature and seal and sent Bryce to threaten Alpha Leonardo,” I said, but my mother shook her head. She refused to listen to me. She was too hurt to understand what I had just said. Instead, she wept.

~Sylvester~

What Tamia did blew me away. She fearlessly came to my defence and put the council in their place. I was blessed.

I looked at Dominic's box and was grateful that he did not come. The hearing would have been difficult if he had shown up. Of everyone, he was the only one that could disrespect me without consequence. It wasn't that I could not deal with him, but I had to respect my mother and not hurt her by hurting him.

Larry seemed disappointed, and I figured he must have planned something with Dominic. I needed to investigate that man. Even though we all knew Dominic did not have the smarts to pull off something of that magnitude, I could not say the same for Larry.

Tamia was right when she asked them if they traced the documents. As much as they wanted to end the conversation after emphasising attacking Bane and Leo, I had to decline their request to end the meeting.

Pamela clamoured on Leo's issue deliberately. She said many things about the eastern alpha while watching Tamia's reaction. I knew what she was trying to prove, but I knew Tamia belonged to me and her heart beat only for me.

"Have you all finished?" I finally spoke, and there was silence. Then Vino stood to speak.

"Yes, we have, your lordship, and we ask to close the meeting," he said, and I shook my head.

"Today isn't a silent day for me," I said, and Vino sat back in his chair.

I looked at Pamela.

"What did you say were alpha Leonardo Albert's crimes?" I asked her.

"Word has it that he has teamed up with Bane to help build his army, of which they plan on marching up north to overthrow you and take over," she said with conviction, and I smiled.

"And where did you hear this?" I asked, and she did not look so confident again.

“We must keep our ears to the ground and listen for harmful news that can bring the downfall of our structure.” She explained, and I smiled.

” In other words, it is a rumour,” I said, and she was silent.

“And you ask me to launch an attack against this alpha based on a rumour that has no origin or facts,” I said so she could understand the stupidity of her request.

“I also did not miss that you kept looking at my mate while you made that request,” I said and smiled.

“Let this be the last time this council will try to use Tamia’s ex-husband as bait. It is low and disrespectful. It is stupid and baseless, and I am highly disappointed in all of you.” I said.

“You all called me here for a question and answer session based on baseless allegations. I would have been impressed if you had done your work, but you didn’t.” I said.

“While you are all trying to create an issue out of nothing, there is a serious matter pending that we are yet to discuss,” I said, and they were attentive.

“Who sent Enforcer Bryce Golubev yesterday morning to the east to demand development taxes from Alpha Leonardo? This was done after I told Vino I did not pass that order. Why wasn’t he called back? Why did he threaten the alpha?” I asked, and they were silent.

Tamia was in shock.

I should have told her when she returned to our room yesterday evening, but I was too angry about what the council was doing and worried about how far they were willing to go to say anything to her.

It is a shame that Leo and I can never be friends because I took away his price possession, but I respected the alpha for reaching out instead of reacting.

“I need an answer,” I said, and Councilwoman Joan Clayman stood to speak.

“With all due respect, your Lordship, how did you come about this?” she asked, and I smiled.

“Alpha Leo had the heart to reach out to us and enquire about the so-called development tax. I am glad he did not revolt.” I said and refused to change the topic.

“I asked a question,” I reminded them, and no one spoke, so I looked at Marcel, and he nodded.

Kappa William ushered in the enforcer, and the council members were silent.

“Bryce,” Marcel said, and the man knelt and kept his head bowed. He wasn’t allowed to look into our eyes, and he knew his place.

” Who gave you the order to go to the east yesterday morning? Who paid for your flight and commissioned the mission?” Marcel asked, and he did not speak.

“If you choose to hold your tongue, you and your family will be tried for treason. Delivering false news in the name of the Wolf lord is treasonous,” Marcel warned him, and the man bowed his head.

“I honestly thought the order was genuine. Lord Dominic gave it to me,” he said, and people began to murmur.

“When did he give this to you?” I asked him.

“Three nights ago. It had your seal on. I believed it was from your office,” he said, and people began to murmur.

I could hear outrage and disappointment in the room.

I was wondering if that was why Dominic did not show up. Did he know we would find out the truth? Was he somehow on the run?

“We need to hunt Dominic down and arrest him. He has a lot of explaining to do.” I Linked Marcel and Theodore, and they told me they were already on it.

“Dominic should be arrested,” Pamela said, and I noticed Vino was shocked and silent.

"I looked at Larry, who was equally shocked, but I could not believe his reaction. They could have planned it. He could have as well been the mastermind and planned it with my brother to be the fall guy. I

I looked at him and let my eyes linger on his.

"I have no hand in this, Lord Volkov," he said, and I smiled.

"That is not for you to decide." I said, and he widened his eyes.

Kappa William and his men moved to arrest Larry.

"You are guilty until proven innocent. Whatever Dominic does reflects on you." I said, and most of the council members disagreed with me, but I did not care; I was lord after all, it was time to let them know who was truly in charge.

"With that out of the way, I want to use this opportunity to state that the east is a sovereign region, and we will not tax their alpha. I might be the Wolf lord, but the alpha of the east rules the east, likewise that

of the south. As long as they do not declare war, I will not move to attack them. I do not have lives to waste or homes and families to ruin. War might give my seat and this council money and power, expand our lands and strengthen our reach and hold, but it also ruins lives, destroys homes and brings pain and sorrow to people. My father did much of that in his time, creating enemies for the north and my family's name. His actions led to his death and birthed grudges from all over. I am not here to continue in his footsteps. My time is for healing, peace and prosperity. None of you should try to force my hand against anyone, secretly or openly, or I will see that action as treason," I said, and they were silent.

I had said my peace and decided to end the discussion.

Vino ended the discussion, and we left.

Tamia sat in the passenger's seat of the Jeep, a bit silent. It was clear that she was baffled about something. I decided to wait until we got home so we could discuss it.

I also wanted to reward her for her bravery and for coming to my aid.

She was the best.

Every day that passes, I fight with myself and Knight not to go against tradition and claim her. We had two more months to go, but it felt like forever. I wanted to be one with her now.

I touched her lap, and she smiled at me.

“I am glad that went well, ” she said, and I nodded.

“Thanks to you, darling; you deserve a reward for it,” I said and ran my palm up her thigh. She opened her legs to grant me access, and I could smell her arousal. Knight growled in my head, and I swayed.

“Focus,” she teased, and I looked at the car in front of us, contemplating if I should park and take her. I decided against it last minute and overtook Theodore and Marcel’s Jeep. I needed to get home in a hurry.

I parked at the estate’s entrance and made Tamia alight the Jeep so we could rush in.

I did not speak to anyone, and it made her giggle.

I entered our bedroom and crashed my lips against hers.

I was about to get into it when someone began to bang on my door.

“Sylvester, how could you!” I heard my mother’s voice, and I knew why.

I grumbled, let Tamia down and zipped up my fly.

She giggled, and I was slightly annoyed that my mother would bang on my door the way she did.

I opened the door, and she walked into my bedroom and slapped me.

There was silence in the room.

I could tolerate her doing that, but I had warned her against hitting me. She tried to send another one, and I held her hand and roared at her. Tamia held me from behind to calm down. Tears were streaming down my mother’s face.

" Why did you arrest your brother? I did as Tamia instructed and stopped him from attending the hearing; why lock him up?" she said, and I turned to look at Tamia.

I was surprised that she arranged it without telling me. She knew, and her eyes pleaded with me.

"Did you instruct my mother to keep Dominic?" I asked Tamia, and she nodded.

"I did. I did it for you. You were worried about him and Larry working against you. He was the only one that could challenge you, so I asked her to stop him from attending.." She said, and I knew she meant well. However wrong her actions were, I knew she meant well; it showed in her eyes.

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~Tamia~

Avery and Linda arrived in my room a few minutes after they had linked me.

They sat on the couch while I dressed up in Sylvester's clothes.

What happened with his mother baffled me, and I was nervous about what to expect from the woman.

The switch was disturbing, and somehow I knew it would not be easy onwards.

I did not need to guess whose side Sylvester was on. Stephanie had picked a dangerous game because I was bound to win.



I joined Avery and Linda on the couch, then linked the staff to serve us tea and biscuits.

“What is with Stephanie?” Avery asked me, looking curious.

“She was drinking in the lounge of this wing, and we went to say hello. She was very nasty to us. Calling us whores, backstabbers, thieves, name it, Tamia. She looked like she was out of it,” Avery said, and I sighed sadly.

“She is unhappy about what happened with Dominic and believes I was the mastermind behind his arrest. I am officially her enemy now,” I said, and Linda hissed.

“That is pathetic and silly. What do you have to gain from that? You already have it all. You will be the lady of the north in two months. Sylvester is indisputably yours. She is silly,” Linda said, sounding irritated.

“Actually, I did ask her to make sure that Dominic does not show up at the hearing, and I did imply that I will go against him if he troubles Sylvester,” I confessed, and Linda rolled her eyes.

“So what? The asshole deserves it and much more. Sometimes I suspect she didn’t give birth to Sylvester because of the way she is quick to side with Dominic against him, even if Dominic is in the wrong, and that douchebag is always in the wrong. I think it is an odd situation. I can understand favouritism, but this is too damn much. Screw her. We do not need her as our friend.” Linda said, and I giggled

Linda made a lot of sense, but I knew Stephanie was Sylvester’s mother.

“She disagrees with Sylvester’s policies. She wanted him to get justice for her husband. She wanted him to expand..” I said, and Avery began to laugh, interrupting me in the process.

“Really, who will get justice for all the people her husband wronged? Her husband ruined lives and wrecked homes. Bane is a hero. I do not care what people say,” Avery said, and I covered her mouth.

“Please do not say things like that. The walls have ears, and we do not want Stephanie to have anything against us.” I said, and Linda laughed.

Just then, Nancy walked in with our tea and biscuits, and I was worried she might have heard Avery. She was about to leave when I stopped her.

"I am sorry for what I am about to do, Nancy, but I will need you to taste the food. A lot is happening right now, and I am just being careful," I said, and Nancy smiled.

"It is alright, Luna," she said, tasted our teas, and ate our biscuits.

She stood for about ten minutes before I apologised and dismissed her.

"What was that about?" Avery asked, biting into her biscuit.

I placed the tea by my nose, and the scent was a bit strong, so I put it down and opted to drink the cranberry variation instead of the black tea.

"Stephanie hates us, and she was married to a psycho. I do not want to make mistakes," I said, and Linda laughed.

"What is wrong with the tea?" Avery asked me, and I shook my head.

"The smell is a bit too strong this afternoon. I wonder if the brand is what we are used to. I will ask Nancy." I said, and she nodded and opted to take the cranberry variation, too; likewise, Linda.

"So, who do you think it is?" Avery asked me the real reason they had come.

"I doubt it is Dominic; I think someone set him up to throw us off their scent. He is the most obvious culprit. It is just too easy," I said, and Linda laughed.

"Sometimes life can be easy, and the truth might really be what it is. Just look at how easily we found love again," she said, and I nodded.

"I am not disputing the fact that he might have a hand in this. Possibly, he did it, but he was too stupid to cover his tracks. It is a possibility, but between Brighton's attack and this, it does not seem like the same person." I said, and Avery nodded.

"I agree, but it still does not mean Dominic is innocent. He might have miscalculated or tried to copy the original crime hoping it would go a certain way," she said, and it made a lot of sense.

“Dominic was desperate to take over from his brother. The issue with Brighton must have given him the idea to try to replicate the same scenario with an alpha alleged to have teamed up with the enemy of the north. Either way, it would be a winning situation; it would have caused a war or forced Sylvester to step down.” I said, and Linda frowned.

“But if Sylvester steps down, it would leave the Volkov’s line and go to the Sidorovs, then the Orlovs. If neither Marcel nor Theodore cuts it, the north will have to choose between Dominic and Vino to lead

them. Neither of them is an alpha, but they would likely lean towards Dominic.” Linda said, and I nodded.

“You can put it that way, but we also have to consider Dominic’s friendship with Larry. Larry is the eldest on the council. He hates Sylvester and believes Dominic should take over from him. The man must have assured Dominic that he would force the council to endorse him. In exchange, Dominic will be his puppet and wage war, increase the power of the seat and the council and enrich the north,” I said, and they were silent.

“So, how is Sylvester handling it?” Avery asked, and I could not answer that question because I did not know.

“I think we should investigate this thing like we used to do back in the east,” Linda said.

“I do not think Theodore would want you to get involved,” I said, and she rolled her eyes. She wanted to do this for the thrill.

” Let us bring it up during dinner,” I said to them, and Avery agreed.

I decided to tell them what I really wanted.

“I know this might sound crazy.” I began, and everyone was attentive.

“It might even be unnecessary. There might be nothing to it,” I said and sighed.

“But we need to investigate Stephanie,” I said, and Avery frowned.

“Why? The woman is clearly unstable and a psycho, but that would be a waste of time because she would not want to work against her sons. There is

no way she would set either of them up. She is also a victim in this,” Avery said, and I nodded at my friend.

“I am not asking that we investigate her because of the event. She has no hand in this and can never actively work against her son. But I need to know what she has in store for Sylvester. She is always quick to side with Dominic against him, and there is that issue of Sylvester not wanting to get the revenge she wanted so badly. I need to protect my man from a woman that is hurting and trying to lash out.” I said and sighed.

”He told her to get out,” I confessed, and Linda gasped.

“And he sided with me against her. You needed to see the rage and scorn on her face when she realised he wouldn’t back her up. She said many implicating things that she only got away with because Sylvester is her son. There is no way Stephanie is going to let what happened today go. No matter what happens, I need to be a step ahead of her, and I need help,” I said, and Linda smiled.

Just then, I felt nauseous and rushed to the bathroom to vomit.

“What is the matter with you?” Linda asked me, and they joined me in the bathroom. Other than the tea and biscuits I ingested, there was nothing in my stomach. So when I threw everything up, I sat by the toilet seat, heaving.

Avery poured cold water overhead, and I sighed with relief because I was burning up.

“What is wrong with you?” Linda asked, looking concerned, and I shook my head

“I guess I am reacting to something in the tea or biscuits. It might also be because of the up-and-down feeling today. Everything has been crazy.” I said, feeling better.

“Maybe you should rest,” Avery said, and we left the bathroom and went back to the couch.

We talked about other things, watched a movie, and then they left.

Sylvester returned thirty minutes after they left, looking very angry and troubled.

He went to the bathroom immediately, and even though I wanted to join him, I wasn't feeling that great.

He lingered in the bathroom before coming to bed.

"Are we not going for dinner?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

He looked at me and held my hand.

"You look pale," he said with concern, and I smiled at him and caressed his cheeks gently.

"And you look tensed," I said, and he smiled at me and pulled me into his arms.

I placed my head against his chest, and he wrapped his arms around me. I felt his uneasiness, and I knew the issue with his brother troubled him.

"You need to be calm, darling. I know you care about Dominic, and I pray he is innocent too, but you need to be calm," I said, and he kissed the top of my head.

"I want you to join me in questioning him and Larry tomorrow. Do you think you are up for it?" He asked me, and I looked at him with a broad smile.

"That will be amazing. It will be more fun than anything I have been doing since I got here," I said, and he frowned at me, his dark eyes flashing. I wondered what I said to make Knight jealous.

"More fun than making love?" he asked, and I smiled broadly, shaking my head.

"No, definitely not," I said, and he smiled and tickled me.

"Did my mother come to this room after I left?" he asked, and I shook my head.

"We are definitely now enemies. I doubt she will come here knowing you aren't here," I said, and he nodded.

“She has taken a short trip, and for some reason, I am nervous because it has to do with Dominic,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Avery and Linda said they saw her in the lounge a few hours ago,” I said, and he nodded.

“The alcohol must have given her a bright idea,” he said, and it did not sit well with me.

A desperate woman would do anything. Stephanie’s judgement could not be trusted at the moment.

“Did you have her followed?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

“I doubt I need to have her followed, Tamia. She is just angry. Besides, she is my mother. I can’t treat her like a suspect in a crime,” he said, and I nodded even though I disagreed with him.

I honestly wished he had her followed. Deep down, I doubted her trip had anything to do with Dominic’s freedom.

After hearing what Avery told me she said to them on their way to my room, I knew she believed I had masterminded everything.

She had also implied that my position with Sylvester wasn’t a given and that two months was time enough for things to change. I wondered what my new antagonist had in store for me. I prayed silently for the strength to overcome.

~Tamia~

Morning came, and Sylvester and I got ready for breakfast.

It was going to be a busy day, but I was not feeling up to it.

I was a bit tired even though we didn’t do anything and I had just woken up from sleep.

I did not think much of it and just got ready quietly.

Once we were done getting ready, we went to the dining room to have breakfast.

Everyone was there as always, and we ate in silence.

What happened with Dominic had brought gloom into our lives. I hoped the matter was solved quickly.

I prayed it did not linger because we all deserved better.

Our love was still young; we were still getting to know each other and trying to manoeuvre through our differences to accept them and make it work. This matter needed to be solved as soon as possible.

“Tamia will be accompanying us to question Dominic and Larry,” Sylvester announced, and Marcel nodded.

“I want Avery to come with us too,” Marcel said, and Sylvester didn’t seem okay with it, but he did not complain.

Theodore requested to bring Linda along, and I touched Sylvester’s lap to stop him from making a scene.

I could not really eat, so I just pushed my food about the plate picking the bits and stalling for breakfast to be over.

We finished, and Sylvester decided to go to the cells on the property to question Dominic.

As we moved towards the place, I remembered when Dominic attacked my friends and me and locked us up because of councilwoman Jenny’s death and the attack on his mother.

I was still baffled why the attackers spared Stephanie’s life. It really didn’t add up.

When we got there, we noticed Dominic outside his cell in chains standing with some officers.

“What is going on here?” Sylvester growled. He was angry.

“What is the council task force doing here?” he asked, and the men saluted him and bowed their heads immediately.

“Your eminence, the council has ordered that we move him to the council prison,” One of them said.

“Under whose orders and why?” Sylvester asked.

“It was a collective decision by all council members. The act of treason is judged and punished by the council,” The man said and handed Sylvester a paper.

Sylvester did not bother to read the piece of paper. He just tore it.

“Out of my house now!” he ordered them, and they shook; even I shook because there was an authority in his voice.

We let them leave, and Sylvester’s Kappas ushered Dominic to a room.

We followed, and as soon as Dominic sat down, he looked at Sylvester.

“What would you gain in this? You already have it all. Why lock me up? First, your woman threatened mother to keep me at home, and now I am being tried for treason. What happened to you, Sylvester? We used to fight, but nothing like this,” He said with disbelief, and I could see he was genuinely hurt.

“It stopped being fair when you decided to forge my signature and seal and send Bryce to stir up shit in the east. You knew the development tax issue was false, yet you still chose to use that same method to cause trouble for me. Why?” Sylvester asked him, and he looked at me.

“Do not look at Tamia; focus on me, Dominic. I need to know why you would actively work against me,” he said, and Dominic’s eyes welled up with tears.

“If I tell you my truth, would you believe me?” Dominic asked, and Sylvester did not respond.

“Answer me!” Sylvester growled at his brother. The pressure was overwhelming, making me nauseous, but I held it. Beads of sweat formed on my forehead, and my vision was a bit blurry, but I tried to keep it together.

“I did not give anything to Bryce. He is lying against me, Sylvester. Mother asked me before she left to get help, and I told her the same thing. I did not do this. I have never given Bryce anything or sent him on an errand before. I was stunned when I was arrested, and his name came up as my accomplice.” Dominic said to his brother.



“Why would Bryce lie against you?” Sylvester asked, and Dominic looked at me.

“She wants to be rid of me. Can’t you see what she is doing? Mother told me how you treated her and insulted her because of this woman. Did it ever occur to you that she and her so-called ex might be trying to divide the strength of the north? Bryce might have collected money or something from Leo and Bane to do this. They need a reason to go to war. They might have done this to try to create the opportunity to attack. Do you not think it is weird she would just fall in love with you and want to spend the rest of her life with you? All three of you are blind. You destroyed their homes and took them away

from their mates. No matter how fucked up their marriage situation was, you can’t dispute that they loved their mates. Do not let them turn you against your people, Sylvester. I might be a douchebag, and you and I might not see eye to eye on many things, but I did not do this. I did not send Bryce anywhere. I do not know why he will speak my name,” Dominic said and bowed.

“Your explanation isn’t good enough for me, Dominic. I will give you time to think about things, and then I will return. If you do not tell me the truth, I will hand you over to the council and wash my hands off the case,” Sylvester told him calmly.

“Mother was right when she said she needed to go get help because she doubted you would help me, since your woman controls you now,” Dominic said, looking at me scornfully.

“Matter of fact, she is right. I am a fool for my mate, and it will always be that way. You are lucky she isn’t evil or vindictive. You wouldn’t have been here if that was the case,” Sylvester told Dominic, and tears streamed down Dominic’s face.

“I didn’t do this, little brother. I swear on my wolf and everything I hold dear that I did not do this. Someone or some people are trying to set me up. Please do not let them win,” he pleaded with Sylvester in tears, and somehow I suspected the man was telling the truth.

It broke my heart to see them like this.

I decided I would come and speak to him alone.

“Let us go,” Sylvester said and turned his back.

“Please, Sylvester, I am begging you,” Dominic said in tears.

“The punishment of treason is death. I didn’t do this,” he pleaded, and I placed a hand over Sylvester’s shoulder.

“You can’t leave him here unprotected. He could be telling the truth. If he is, the culprits might try to finish the job,” I linked him, and Sylvester looked at me. His eyes lingered on me, and he looked at Dominic and then at Marcel.

“Lock him in a protection cell,” He ordered Marcel and led me out.

I noticed we were heading for the exit, and Marcel and Theodore were not behind us.

“where are we going?” I asked Sylvester.

“To see Larry,” he said, and I shook my head.

“I doubt it will yield anything,” I said, and he frowned.

“We are at a dead end. I need to know who is who in this, Tamia. My reputation and the peace of our world are at stake here,” He said, and I pulled him close to me. I could feel his panic.

~Devin~

I was sitting in my office when my beta, Lukman, walked into my office to announce Alpha Jake Brighton’s arrival. I thought my business with his pack was over. What was he doing in my pack? I did not want to seem rude, but I wasn’t in the mood for a guest.

“Let him in,” I told my beta.

Alpha Brighton walked into my office smiling, and I wondered what the occasion was.

“Good afternoon, Bane,” he said, and I plastered a fake smile on my face to avoid being rude.

“Hello, Brighton,” I told him, and he nodded and sat down without me offering him a seat. The man made himself comfortable.

“To what do I owe this visit?” I asked him, wanting to get straight to the point, and he sighed.

“I was laying on my bed last night thinking of how to improve my people’s lives when an idea popped into my head,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Shouldn’t you be discussing that with Volkov?” I asked, and he had an angry scowl on his face.

“I can never discuss my people with that bastard. He has done enough,” he said, and I wasn’t comfortable with his words. As much as I wanted to dissolve the rule of the north, I wasn’t comfortable having such a conversation.

Jake noticed and frowned at me.

“Did I come on a bad day?” he asked, and I wanted to say yes, but I shook my head and smiled at him.

I couldn’t be happy or enthusiastic about anything. There were just two months left to the blue moon. If I don’t do anything and Sylvester claims Tamia, I would have to kill him to get her back. I hope she isn’t in love with him. I needed to do something quickly.

“Care to elaborate?” I finally said, wanting to be rid of the man.

He smiled, adjusted his seat, and then looked at my shelf where I had drinks.

I deliberately didn’t offer him anything because I did not want to stand up.

“If you want some, you can pour yourself a glass,” I said, and he smiled and went to pour himself a glass of brandy. He took a sip and returned to sit down.

“I know what you did for my people was from the kindness of your heart, and I appreciate it,” he started, and I was attentive.

“I was hoping you could allow my people to work in your region. Mostly part-time odd jobs in construction and the factories,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“The income and experience will help develop my people, and if things get worse with the north, we can abandon our lands and settle down in your region as members of your pack. I am willing to let go of my leadership for the sake of my people,” he said, and I knew he was serious.

I had to respect the love he had for his people.

“I do not think that will be possible in the south because we are highly populated,” I said, and his smile dropped.

“But,” I added, and there was hope in his eyes.

“I plan on visiting Leonardo Albert in the east. They have land and jobs. Your people will be able to settle and work there. He might even give you land to use to lead your people.” I said, and he frowned at me.

“Are you his friend?” he asked, feeling awkward about my suggestion.

“We are acquainted, and I know they need people for manual labour due to the current issues they had with the north and the fact that some of their people have moved to the south,” I told him, and he smiled at me.

“When do you plan to visit him?” he asked, and I sighed.

“I have an appointment for tomorrow. Mind you, I have an issue to discuss with him already, so you will have to table your matter yourself,” I told him, and he nodded.

“What time do you leave for the east tomorrow?” he asked

“Ten in the morning. Mountain Pack isn’t far from Greenwood. I will be there in two hours.” I told him, and he nodded and stood up.

“I will return by eight tomorrow so we can leave for the place together.” He said, and I nodded.

Morning came, and Jake Brighton arrived earlier than eight. I knew he was desperate. I could see his desperation, and I hoped Leo would ease his mind and put a smile on his face.

The people of Brighton needed a break. It was sad I couldn’t give them that.

We arrived at Mountain on time. I expected Leo was waiting for me in his office. I had to commend the man for being civil.

We were offered drinks, and I opted to drink water instead. Beta Casper took us to Leo’s office, but I asked Jake to wait so I could speak to Leo privately.

I entered Leo's office, and he was looking bedraggled. His beard had overgrown, and he had dark circles. I could tell he was not sleeping, but it wasn't my business.

"To what do I owe this visit, Alpha Devin?" He said. I did not know if he was in the right mood to discuss my concerns. I knew Tamia was the reason for his appearance. I did not understand why he did not treat her well when they were together. He must have thought she would always be with him hence why he accepted Amanda. It was his loss.

"Alpha Leo," I said.

"I do not know where to begin, but I need your help," I added, and he was attentive.

"I do not know how good your relationship is with Volkov, but I need you to help me inform Tamia that she is my fated," I said, and he exclaimed.

I knew I sounded like a madman, and it wasn't far from the truth, but I needed her to know so she would know that her fated was out there and he was waiting for her. I was hopeful that would buy me time.

"I do not think that will be possible. She is Sylvester's property now. I, too, wish I could take her back, but we both know the Wolf Lord never lets go of his trophies." He said, and I realised he had not heard of the wedding.

"I am desperate. Please help me. My wolf and I have been suffering. You know what it is like. You have a fated. Every day I lay awake wishing I had taken her away from that dinner and dealt with the consequences later. That way, she would have been mine, and Sylvester wouldn't have her because

she wouldn't be in the east to begin with. Please, Leo, I will give anything for you to tell her the truth about me," I pleaded desperately, and he leaned forward.

"Why are you desperate? I told you Sylvester sounded possessive of her. I doubt he will let her go. She is his trophy. The best advice I could give you is to try and visit their annual sports in four months. The trophies are allowed to attend. I plan on attending so I can see her too. She no longer bears my mark. She would recognise you, and then both of you can decide..." he said, but I interrupted him and shook my head.

“I do not have that much time, Leo,” I said and bowed.

“Sylvester will marry and claim her on the blue moon night. They have celebrated their engagement,” I said, and he exclaimed. I looked at him. His hands were shaking, and tears formed in his eyes immediately. It was clear he had not let go, and I had come to the wrong person for help.

“What?” he said in a low voice. I could hardly make out the sound if it weren’t for the fact that I could read lips.

“They are getting married, Leo. I am desperate.” I said.

“In that case, I will advise you to let her go,” he said, and I shook my head and banged my hand on the table.

“Don’t ask me to do what you couldn’t do, Leo. I just want you to help me.” I pleaded, my hands shaking.

“Please, I will give anything..” I said, and he shook his head.

“Did it occur to you that she is in love with him and wants to spend the rest of her life with him? Tamia isn’t the type to be forced into a union. I can’t take that bliss from her by telling her about you. I can’t. I know what happened to me with Amanda. My bliss was taken from me the moment I caught Amanda’s scent. It ruined my perfect life. It ruined everything that I held dear, Devin. I can’t allow Tamia to go through that kind of turmoil. It is easy to chase after your fated if you aren’t in love, but it is torture when you have already given your heart to another. No matter how strong the pull was, I could not stop loving Tamia.

I still love her, and I always will. If she is getting married to Sylvester, I will advise you to reject the bond and let her be. Please. She does not need to be torn between her heart’s desire and fate. It wasn’t easy for me; I do not want her to have the same experience,” he pleaded with me. Although the news seemed to break his heart, he was still looking out for her.

“I can’t let her be. I can’t,” I told him my truth, and he sighed.

“Then I wish you the best, but I won’t help you to mess Tamia up,” I told him, and I was mad that he would see my plea as an attempt to mess Tamia up. I did not understand his logic, but I knew he was still hurting. I had come to the

wrong person for help. There was no way he would help me get with Tamia. He was selfish like that.

Jake Brighton was ushered into Leo's office, and he explained his matter to Leo.

"Why haven't you taken your idea to the north? I am sure the Wolf Lord will have a solution," Leo said, repeating my words, and Jake got angry.

"I can never go to that bastard for help. He imposed development tax on my people and then sent his enforcers to attack my people when we couldn't pay," he said, and Leo shook his head.

"I do not think you should be quick to judge. I do not know what is happening in the north, but I doubt the Wolf lord did that to you. Two days ago, enforcers came here with a written order that we are to pay development taxes henceforth or face the consequences. I panicked, but my beta talked some sense into me. I called the Lord's office, and his beta was shocked. They never passed such an order. I

believe the issue was from the council. There is a possibility he doesn't know of the attack on your people." He said, and Jake shook his head.

"He is marrying your ex-wife. He wouldn't want her to see him as a monster by taxing and attacking her people." Brighton said, making a valid point, and Leo sighed.

"Very well. I still doubt the lord had something to do with it, but I am willing to offer your people part-time jobs. I cannot let them settle here because you are under the north, and I do not want trouble with the north," he said.

Jake was happy about Leo's response. It was clear he wasn't expecting to get anything from it, but Leo came through.

I thanked Leo for his time, even though he did not agree to help me. I understood his position but could not give up on my fated.

Jake and I returned to Greenwood, and I teased him about his pack being named after his last name, and he found it funny.

"It was a settlement, and my ancestor was the alpha. It was called Brighton's pack, and as they grew, the settlement became a village, and it was named

after the pack,” he explained, and I laughed. I knew he would soon retire, which was why he was taking all the steps necessary to secure his people and help his son rule with ease. I had to commend him for it. I would have been happier if my father had been as strong as him.

Jake’s wife was taken from him by Lord Maurice Volkov. They were only nineteen when it happened, but he held firm for the sake of their twins and was still holding firm. I respected the man greatly.

“I would like you to visit Brighton, so I can host you, Devin. You have been most kind to us. I want my son and daughter to meet you. I think you can come and unwind in Brighton. We might not be developed, but our environment is serene and good for the soul,” he said, and it sounded like a good idea because I needed to think, and I couldn’t do that with my mind muddled up.

~Tamia~

I could feel Sylvester’s uneasiness about my trip to the western village. I did not know how to tell him I could never leave him.

After our discussion, he insisted that we visit Larry.

He wanted to get to the bottom of the matter, and I needed to figure out how to stop him from wasting his time.

I was feeling nauseous, so I went to the bathroom to throw up my stomach’s content.

Sylvester rushed to the bathroom, a bit worried. He carried me to the shower and turned on the water while he took off my clothes.

“I noticed you were slightly warm last night but didn’t think much of it. Now you are burning up. What is happening?” he asked me calmly, and I could see he was fighting every fibre of his being from acting out.

“It started after we had tea and biscuits yesterday afternoon. I threw it all up and felt better, but the nausea is back,” I managed. The water was soothing, and I wanted to stay under it.

“Who served the snacks?” He asked, and I knew what he wanted to imply, so I shook my head.



"I doubt they did anything to the food, darling. I made the person that served it taste it," I said, withholding the person's name, and he was silent. Once I was calm, he carried me to the bed.

"You can't go to Brighton tomorrow in this condition," he said, and I smiled because I was already feeling better.

"Nice try, Alpha," I said and touched his nose. He did not smile.

"Let me call the doctor?" he said, and I knew how important going to Brighton was, so I shook my head and sat up, pretending to be strong.

"I feel better. You will be wasting your time. I believe the stress caused it, and something might have irritated my stomach from breakfast. Come on. Let us visit Larry." I said, and he frowned at me for a bit before finally accepting.

We got dressed and left the room. The moment we walked past Stephanie's room, I became nervous.

"Where do you think your mother went to?" I asked, and Sylvester shook his head.

"I do not know, and honestly, I can't be bothered. No matter who she brings to plead with me to let Dominic go, I won't listen. Sadly, she does not understand the gravity of Dominic's offence," he said, and I touched his hands.

"I do not think your brother did it, Sylvester. I believe him. He is too proud to beg like that. Someone wants him to take the fall. We need to question Bryce, not Larry, and you must ensure the council does not get their hands on Dominic. If they do, he would be found guilty. I doubt they would go through the stress of finding the truth. See how they handled the matter that concerned you. They did not do any investigation to figure out what was going on. They tried to blame you for the crime. They are either a bunch of lazy idiots or against the Volkov family and want you to step down by all means. Which is why you can't let them lay their hands on him." I said, and he pulled me close as we walked.

"If my mother only knew you meant well," he said and stopped to kiss the top of my head. Then he looked into my eyes and caressed my chin.

"Do not get your hopes up, green eyes. Dominic might disappoint you," he said, and I smiled at him.

We left the mansion, and a Jeep was waiting at the entrance.

We drove to Lucland silently, and Stephanie's trip did not sit well with me. I doubted she was going to get help. Whatever she planned on doing was extreme, and I knew it had to do with me.

I could not understand why the woman would blame me for this. I might have overstepped when I went to ask her to keep her son at home, and I might have said some things that scared her, but I have done nothing wrong.

I was troubled, and so was Kaira. Stephanie wasn't a good enemy to have.

Even though Sylvester had sided with me against her, and I knew she couldn't make him change his mind about me, I did not want their relationship to be damaged.

I remembered all the good times we had had with Stephanie and wondered if she had been pretending all along. I doubted it, though, because she seemed genuine. She loses her mind whenever it has to do with Dominic, and I needed to know why.

We arrived at the Northern prisons, and to my surprise, Sylvester asked to see Bryce instead of Larry.

"You changed your mind?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

"I want us to see Bryce first, and then we can check on Larry," he said, smiling, and I smiled back.

I could see he was stressed and worried, but he hid it well.

It wasn't easy knowing that faceless and nameless people were plotting against him.

I just hope he handles the pressure well.

We were led to an interrogation room.

The smell of the disinfectant they used to clean the place filled my nose, and I felt sick but held it. I knew if I showed any sign of sickness, Sylvester won't allow me to go to Brighton.

“May I have a glass of cold water?” I linked Sylvester, and he frowned at me. I smiled at him, so he won’t think anything was wrong.

“Thirsty”, I whispered, and he nodded.

Four chairs were in the room, and one was welded to a desk. I figured that was for the prisoner. I sat on one of the free chairs while Sylvester paced.

The water came, and it was freezing. Drinking it made me feel better. Bryce was ushered in a few minutes later and kept his eyes bowed.

“Look up,” I ordered him to look into his eyes.

He refused until Sylvester ordered him to.

“You do whatever she tells you,” he warned the man, and he apologised to me.

“Explain how Dominic sent you the order.” Sylvester said, and Bryce looked down.

“Look up!” I ordered the man I went to stand beside Sylvester.

I doubted the man would tell the truth, but I needed to see his eyes.

“He called me to come to the estate. Then he handed the document to me and told me that his eminence wanted me to carry out the task quickly. That the east is supposed to pay development tax, and if they refuse, I should use force.” he said, and Sylvester looked at him.

“Was he the one that asked you to request development tax from Brighton too?” Sylvester asked, but I doubted that was the right question because the council-owned up to it.

“That order came from the council”, he said, and I now understood what Sylvester was doing. He wanted to gauge his reaction. He wanted to understand how he behaved when he told the truth and compare it to his mannerisms when he spoke of his dealings with Dominic. Sylvester was a master.

“Tell me how Dominic called you. When he called, and the time and day you went to the estate?” Sylvester asked, and the man swallowed.

“He called me in the evening, and I went there an hour after his call. This happened five days ago,” he said, and Sylvester was satisfied, but I wasn’t.

“You were right, Tamia; he is lying,” Sylvester linked me.

This wasn’t Sylvester’s duty. His office places him higher than this. They would normally send Kappa William or kappa Wilson to do this. Sylvester must care for his brother to do it himself.

Although Sylvester had figured out the man was lying, Sylvester’s conviction was not enough to free Dominic. The council will still ask for him and will likely sentence him. It wasn’t enough. We did not only have to know Bryce was lying. We had to prove it.

“So you went to the estate in the evening five days ago to receive the order from Dominic Volkov,” I said, summarising his explanation, and Bryce nodded.

I was mad at the bastard but needed to back him into a corner without threatening him.

If I threatened him, his confession might be seen as something made under coercion, which might make it inadmissible.

“Your skin is so sensitive, Tamia; it feels like I am learning your body all over again,” Sylvester linked me, eating me up.

I grabbed onto his hair tightly and writhed.

I felt my orgasm coming, and I couldn’t control it. Everything was going straight to my head, and my skin was burning.

“Sylvester...” I moaned, and my body climaxed.

“I want to see your green eyes, Tamia,” he said and placed himself into me.

He knew I was sensitive, so he was gentle.

“So warm, so soft, so wet,” He moaned and started pumping, hitting the right spots. My body felt so different, and I loved it.

I watched his teeth elongate, and his eyes turn black. Knight was in charge, and he increased his speed.

“Mine,” He growled his famous words. Owning me with every pump, my body responded strongly. Taking it all and wanting more.

It got into my head, and I could no longer keep eye contact, feeling my orgasm coming.

I grabbed him, digging my nails into his skin, wanting everything he was ready to give and all of him.

“I am coming,” I moaned, unable to control my need anymore and shattered all over.

Knight pumped through my orgasm, making me feel like I had an out-of-body experience. If too much pleasure could kill, this would have been my death because he kept pumping, and I kept coming.

Every sense was heightened. Everything amplified. It had never felt this good, and I knew I would be wet every time I thought of this and would find myself running back to him.

He growled and poured into me. My pussy milked him for everything I could get. I felt his hands shake. He could no longer support his weight with it, and he gently lay on top of me to catch his breath.

I wrapped my arms around him and rubbed his back gently. Satisfied and glowing. Sylvester understood my body.

Soon he rolled off me to lie on the bed. Then I turned to the side to look at him. He smiled at me and then touched the tip of my nose gently.

“You know I do not want you in Brighton, but you are too stubborn.” He said, and we both laughed.

“You do not have to solve the mystery, green-eyes. Just come home in three days,” he said, and I smiled and nodded.

“It will feel like an eternity for me here. Not seeing you or being with you for three days would be torture. Please do not let it linger,” He pleaded, and I kissed him to assure him he had nothing to worry about.

He held me all through the night, and soon morning came.

Sylvester made love to me in the shower. We got dressed, and we were famished. So hungry that I felt like biting something. He laughed at my hunger, and we went to the breakfast room.

We walked past Stephanie's room, and I felt a chill down my spine.

The woman's absence and silence troubled me, but Sylvester did not think much of it, so I did not want to bring it up or take any measures, so he won't think I was against his mother. I could only be lucky where she was concerned so many times. She was his mother, after all, and I know he loved her, regardless of her behaviour.

Everyone was in the lounge, and I noticed only Avery was dressed. Linda wasn't dressed, and she did not seem happy.

I sat down and started dishing my food. At the same time, I greeted them individually with the utmost respect a hungry, freshly fucked woman could manage.

"You are really hungry," Avery said and giggled.

"Alpha must have drained you," she teased, and we both laughed, but Linda did not join in. She was upset.

"What is with her?" I linked Avery, and she stopped laughing.

"Theodore said no. He said he would not allow her to travel to Brighton in her condition." she linked me back, and I felt sorry for her, but I could understand his reasons. She was at a delicate stage. She needed to be careful.

Linda was so angry that her mood affected everyone except my tummy. I ate the tarts, croissants, sandwiches. I sampled everything to eat on the table, and Sylvester was surprised.

"I believe they have good food in Brighton, Green eyes," He said, and everyone laughed, including myself.

I felt terrible for Linda, but Theodore had a point: she was carrying his child, and we did not know what kind of stress we would experience in Brighton.

“You will use the jet,” Sylvester said, and I knew if I declined, he would insist. My intention was to arrive there covertly, but it seemed that would not be possible.

“There will be a chauffeur in Gad that will drive you to Brighton. The shadow warriors will be with you, but you won’t see them. They are good at hiding and trailing people, which is why they are called shadow warriors. I have instructed them to only interfere when your lives are in danger,” he said, and I nodded.

As much as I wanted to tell him it wasn’t necessary, I knew those were his conditions.

We got ready to leave, and Sylvester and Marcel decided to drive us to the hangar.

It was a covert mission, so no one was there except the pilot. Avery and I got into the jet.

We landed in Gad an hour later, and I realised the distance would have been torture if we had to drive through. The nausea was terrible, but I kept it together.

True to Sylvester’s words, a driver was waiting for us at the airport in Gad, and we proceeded to Brighton.

As we drove through, I realised Gad was a big city. I also saw a lot of electronic billboards paying homage to Sylvester. I honestly thought the west hated the Volkovs.

“These people seem to love Lord Volkov,” I said aloud, not wanting to call Sylvester by his name.

“Yes, Luna. Lord Sylvester was the one that brought development to Gad. It wasn’t different from Brighton. Where others pushed back, the people of Gad welcomed him, and this was the result. There are other parts of the west like this. After the development of Gad, people accepted him, and he has been working hard ever since. The west is grateful to be under his lordship.” Denis, the Chauffeur, said, and I hoped my work would be easy.

The drive was long, and I threw up twice during the journey.

When we got to Brighton, I could see the difference. It was indeed underdeveloped.

We were taken to a small hotel. It had only twenty rooms, and Avery and I decided to share.

I knew we would have to visit the Alpha, but I wanted to rest before I proceeded. I had seen the destruction the attack caused, and it broke my heart.

“How are you feeling?” Avery asked, handing me a glass of water. I sat on the bed in our room. The air conditioning was on, but I was sweating. I knew I needed to tell someone the truth.

I collected the bottle of water from her and drank the content.

She sat next to me and rubbed my back gently.

“After I threw up that day, I haven’t been feeling good,” I confessed.

“Does Sylvester know?” She asked, rubbing my back, and I shook my head.

“If I told him, he wouldn’t let me come, and you know how important it is for us to do this ourselves,” I said, and she nodded.

“Marcel knows if they come here, the people would attack. He felt we should have left the council to handle it,” She said, and I rolled my eyes.

“Not when the perpetrators are nameless and faceless. We are the only people who can protect their reputation and ensure peace,” I told her and further explained what we had learned from the enforcer. She was in shock.

“Poor Dominic. I know he is a douchebag, but he did not deserve that humiliation. I can understand Stephanie’s grudge. Where is she, by the way?” Avery asked, and my stomach churned.

“I believe she is part of the reason I am ill, Ave,” I said, and my friend frowned.

“That woman has it in for me. I know Sylvester loves me and will always side with me, but I do not want to deal with unnecessary stress, and I am afraid of the extent of the damage she might cost. I also would not want her and Sylvester to be estranged.” I confessed feeling emotional about it, and she hugged me.



I let my tears fall freely, realising I had been holding so much in with no outlet. I didn't want Sylvester to know it bothered me because he had a lot on his plate.

"What about Larry?" She asked, and the thought of Larry made me giggle. I wiped away my tears, laughing.

"Sylvester knows he is innocent but wants to keep him a while longer," I said, and she laughed.

"I must agree with him on that one. The old man is obnoxious," She said, and we giggled.

We ordered lunch and then prepared to visit Alpha Jake Brighton. I was nervous about meeting him, but I was hopeful.

Denis took us to the Alpha's house. A blonde-haired woman about twenty years old let us in. The Alpha lived comfortably, and I was glad his home wasn't destroyed.

Avery and I sat on the couch in the living room, and soon Alpha Jake joined us. He wasn't smiling and came to sit down.

"To what do I owe this visit, Luna Albert?" He asked, and I wished he wouldn't call me that.

"Just call me Tamia. I am yet to wed the lord, and I no longer bear Leonardo Albert's mark." I said with a smile, and he nodded.

"So he sent his woman," he said, referring to Sylvester.

"He wanted to come himself, but I insisted I come in his stead," I said, and he looked away and cursed under his breath.

"Alpha Brighton, Lord Volkov had no hand in this," I said, and he stood up. His hands were shaking, and his mouth was quivering.

"His father took my wife and sister, and now he sent his men to kill my people," He said, and I could understand his pain.

"We are trying to get to the bottom of the issue, Alpha. We are trying to fix the problem. Someone is working against Sylvester to force him to lose favour and step down. Please Alpha. If this person succeeds, judging by their

methods, the four regions would not have it easy,” I said, and he shook his head.

“Alpha Corrigan’s region is secured. Nothing can happen to the south. I will just go and live there with my people,” he said, and I nodded.

“There is no place like home, Alpha,” I said, and he shook his head.

“What do you want, Lady Tamia?” He asked me, and I was about to speak when I felt like throwing up. Avery noticed immediately and asked for their bathroom.

We returned to the living room, and Alpha Jake looked worried.

“You do not seem well. Why will he send you or even let you come?” He said, and I shook my head immediately.

“He didn’t, I insisted,” I managed, and then he sighed.

“I must commend your effort, Luna. Your ex-husband told me the same thing. Let us say that is the case; how can we protect ourselves?” He asked, and I was amazed by his switch but knowing Leo had spoken to him already made me realise he believed Leo but just wanted to hold on to his grudge.

“You can call the Alpha, Beta or Gamma directly to confirm anything henceforth. To show our goodwill, the lord will be footing development projects in Brighton to fix the damage and improve the living standard of the people,” I said, and the man was grinning from ear to ear.

My words must be like music to his ears, and I was glad to put his mind at ease.

“Do you know the name of the enforcer that brought the tax order and led the attack on Brighton?” I asked, and he smiled.

“Councilwoman Pamela sent the tax increment order, but as for the Kappa that attacked, he said he was from Lord Volkov. He told us who sent him before they did their deed,” he explained.

“Did you get his name?” I asked, and he shook his head.

“But I can recognise his face,” He said, and that was good enough for me.

"I will be hosting a small luncheon at the Volkov Estate in a few weeks. I am personally inviting you to come and secretly identify the bastard by looking through the pictures of every kappa warrior that belongs to the north. Do you think it is something you can do?" I asked, and he nodded.

"I would like you to attend a Brighton festival tomorrow night. Some alphas will be in attendance. Kindly have your driver move your belongings to my home. It is wrong to have my future luna, Lady of the north, staying in a hotel. I must say, I see why Lord Volkov chose you," He said, as much as I wanted to decline and just leave in the morning. I knew it would be rude and spoil the little progress I had made with the man, so I obliged him.

~Tamia~

Avery and I insisted on sharing the same room. Alpha Jake offered to have his pack doctor examine me, but I refused. I planned on managing the condition until I got back to the north.

"That went well; too well, I must say," Avery linked me, trying to be cautious, and I smiled at her.

"He believed Leo when he told him but still felt insulted until I showed up," I linked her back, explaining my deduction.

"Alpha Jake Brighton is an old-fashioned man. He expected word to have gone to Sylvester's ears of the atrocity in Brighton, and he expected Sylvester to apologise personally even though he had no hand in it. It is an ego thing for the old man, nothing more." I linked Avery, and she laughed.

"What do you think about Councilwoman Pamela? The woman reeks of treachery," Avery said aloud, and I laughed. It would be unwise for us to remain silent all through the room.

Being former Lunas of top packs, we understood the politics. Alpha Brighton wanted to keep an eye on us and our activities in his territory, so he offered we stay in his house; I was sure people were listening to our conversation.

We had dinner with Alpha Jake, Mikail, his nephew, Iris, his daughter and Donald, his son. His son and nephew were about my age, and I figured Donald would succeed his father soon. His daughter, Iris, kept staring at us during dinner, and I was a bit uncomfortable, but I let it be.

We ate in silence and returned to our room.

“Donald did not seem to like us. I do not know what his deal is. Jake’s nephew, Mikail, was worse. He kept staring at us. Honestly, I can’t wait to be out of this place,” Avery said, lying next to me, and I smiled. The feeling was mutual.

“I am missing Marcel,” She said and sighed.

“He didn’t want me to come, but I insisted. Right now, I just want to head back to the north and never leave his side. It has just been a few hours, and I am missing him so badly,” She said, and I smiled because I felt the same way.

I wondered what Sylvester was doing. As much as I wanted to place a call, it was best I didn’t.

I was about to fall asleep when my phone rang. I did not need to guess who it was. I answered in a heartbeat.

“Miss me already, Green eyes?” he said, and I giggled on the phone.

“More than you can imagine. Would have returned in the morning, but Alpha Jake invited us to a festival tomorrow evening, so we will return after the festival,” I said, and he grumbled on the phone.

We talked about his day, and I handed the phone to Avery to speak with Marcel. Apparently, she did not come with her phone.

We said good night and fell asleep.

We had breakfast in the morning with our host and his children, and it was a very uncomfortable one.

“When are you two leaving?” Donald asked with a very disrespectful tone, and his father cautioned him.

“You might choose to be silent, but I won’t. They are marrying the men that attacked their people and took them away from their husbands. If it isn’t shameless and a desperate act of social climbing, then I do not know what is. Yet we welcome them to our home, allow them to eat at our table and pretend everything is okay. Mikail doesn’t have a mother because of the Dark Alpha; my mother was taken from me because of the Dark Alpha. Yet we are here. I

say these eastern whores should be ashamed of themselves,” He said, and I put down my cutlery and wiped my mouth.

His father was going to speak when I stopped him.

” It is easy to point fingers, call people names and judge them when you do not have the full picture. It is easy to speak about loyalty and moral values when you have not experienced certain things, and judging people looking from the outside is easy. You call us whores and wicked. You call my mate vile and evil, but he was our saviour. Where was your moral compass when my ex-husband broke his promises and forced me to live with his fated, and I lost my rights and standing as luna? Where was your moral compass when Avery’s husband abused her and her wolf day and night, forced her to live with his mistress and placed the bitch above her? No one was willing to help, knowing what she was going through. These monsters revived our faith in love and gave us the strength and courage to try again. Sylvester wiped away my tears and gave me hope when I thought all was lost. My husband did not give me up; I gave myself up to get away from him. As for your mother and aunt, I sympathise with you, but Sylvester is nothing like Maurice. If you are too blind to see it, you need to look into the mirror and question your morals,” I said, picking up my fork to continue the meal; I could not let it waste. No one said anything.

Alpha Brighton gave us a tour of the village. I saw many things that needed improvement, and I made mental notes to relay to Sylvester when I got home.

“Alpha Leo has offered my people part-time work to help with the income. He is truly a nice man.” Jake said, and I smiled at him. I had always known Leo to have a big heart. I was glad the things that happened didn’t take it from im.

“How is he?” I asked, eager to know how he was doing but reluctant to show my eagerness.

“He looks like he has seen better days; Alpha Corrigan said he is still hurting over you. I guess he needs closure,” He said, and I was hurt to learn that my letter did not give him the closure he needed.

“After what you told my son during breakfast, I figured he did it to himself. I think he is finding it hard to forgive himself. I doubt there is anything you can do to help him. Besides, you seem pretty happy. I believe you love Volkov, or you would have used this opportunity to run away. He is a lucky man,” Jake said, and I thanked him.

“I hope Donald and Mikail will heal from what happened to them. Honestly, that is the reason I haven’t handed the pack over to Donald yet; he is about twenty-six and ready to take over, but I am afraid he would make a bad decision that would get him and our people into trouble.” He confessed, and I smiled at him.

“He will heal, Alpha. We all do,” I said, and he nodded.

“I am sorry about the initial reception. Please tell his eminence that I truly feel honoured that he sent you,” he said, and I smiled. He sighed and looked at Avery and me.

“You women have been through a lot and are still holding firm. You need all the strength you can manage in that place. The north is a political jungle of people wrestling for power.

Your places as lunas are never secure, so you have to be careful. Too many people want to be affiliated with the north. With all that has happened, the council is only partially loyal to the Lord. He needs to be careful. Maurice knew this, and that was why he was ruthless. Hence why I do not have a grudge against the old Lord. He needed to be a certain way so there would be peace in our world.

I know Sylvester is trying to be kind, but someone has to be stern, keep an eye open, and ears to the ground. He might be suffering a spillover of something from his father’s time. I am not sure, but some of us old Alphas know of the power struggle between the six ruling houses of the north,” He said, and I absorbed every word and then used that opportunity to ask him to elaborate.

“Do you mind telling me about the power struggle?” I asked, and he sighed.

“Let’s start with Stephanie Volkov,” He said, and my stomach churned.

“She is a nice woman, wasn’t treated well by her family and her mate, but she can be vindictive.” He said, and he noticed my countenance.

“Is there an issue?” he asked, and I shook my head

“Nothing, but I would like to know more about her, and you seem to be in the best position to tell me since you experienced when she was in power,” I said, and he laughed.

“There is nothing special about her. She wasn’t so bright. That was why Maurice preferred his fated to her,” he said, and I was in shock.

No one ever mentioned that Maurice had a fated or that Stephanie had to share him with his fated.

“A fated?” I asked the man, and he nodded.

“It was a well-kept secret. Stephanie is a member of the Belyaev family, so no one would dethrone her. His fated’s name was Lady Alissa Pavlishchev. She was from a small merchant family in Gad.

Stephanie would not share her title even though the Lord was and still is allowed to have more than one Lady. So she always ensured the woman was presented as one of his whores.

Maurice and Stephanie fought about it often, but when the Belyaevs threatened to divide the north, Maurice had to let comply. Hence, why Maurice became power-hungry and a monster.

I believe the man wanted to be so strong that no one would be able to threaten him as the Belyaevs did.

Maurice was able to take over completely and subdue them by wiping out the Belyaevs and their supporters, which were the Babanins and the part of the Lawrence family, leaving Stephanie powerless

and defenceless. Unfortunately, Alissa had passed away before he completed his mission, so he decided to keep Stephanie as his Lady and the only Lady of the north,” He said, and I was stunned.

“Stephanie made sure no one ever spoke of Alissa or remembered her. I doubt Lord Sylvester and Dominic even know her,” he said, and I could not believe how rotten the north was.

I kept all those names in mind and planned to start my investigation from there.

The tour was educative, and I was pleased Jake took the time to show us around and give us some history lessons that we wouldn’t have been privy to had we remained in our cocoon at the estate.

I also realised that I needed to be extra careful where Stephanie was concerned. She was the type to always get what she wanted.

Alphas started arriving, and Jake had to excuse us to attend to his guest.

I noticed Iris was excited about it. Hopefully, she would find her mate and not live her life afraid of fate.

Avery and I were sleeping when a bang on the door woke us.

Someone was sent to inform us that the festival was at full blast, and we were needed at the high table to grace the event. We must have overslept.

Avery and I dressed and decided to grace the occasion as special guests from the north. I suspected we would be representing the Lord and beta. The festival was a full blast, and there was a lot of merriment.

We stayed away from alcohol because we had to remain sharp. Alpha Jake sent Iris to bring us to the high table.

We moved through the crowd, and I admired the lights display and merriment.

Seeing how these people turned their misfortune into joy and bounced back was amazing.

They were strong, and I admired them for it. Women, children, and men played and danced. There were bright colours everywhere, confetti and music. It was beautiful.

We headed to the high table, and then I caught his scent.

“Tamia...” Kaira said, nervous, excited and scared. What had just happened to us.

The scent called to me. It was alluring, strong and demanding, woody and musk, masculine in every way. It surrounded me and dominated me.

I was in a trance. My heart was beating really fast. I tried to think of Sylvester, but the thought of him never came. Who was this stranger that fate had tied me to?

I left Avery's side and stopped following Iris. I followed the scent. The owner was elusive. He knew of me and was leading me somewhere with his scent.



I knew what I was doing was stupid and dangerous, but I could not control myself. I kept telling myself to stop, but my wolf was giddy, and she wanted to know; she wanted to see him.

I walked briskly into a garden, and there he stood with a rose in his hand and fear in his eyes.

Tears formed immediately in my eyes. My heart was pounding, my hands were shaking, and my emotions were all over the place.

I now understood why. Why he did everything he did, and why everyone kept asking if there was anything between us?

Images of him at the party where we met flooded my mind. His attention, his boldness, his possessiveness. I looked at him and began to cry.

“Why didn’t you say anything that night?” I asked him. A tear rolled down his cheek, and he bowed. His hand was shaking too.

## **Chapter 42 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna**

~Tamia~

I leaned into Sylvester in the Limo, and he held me tight. Linda was in Theodore’s arms, and we rode in silence.

I wondered why Vino would allow Larry to bring their exes there. Was he trying to ruin our relationship? Then again, I also knew that the council members bullied him, so he must not have had a say. The man needed to grow a pair, or people would keep walking all over him.

We arrived at the Volkov estate, and Sylvester and I went straight to our bedroom.

Although we had showered at Vino’s mansion, I needed to wash the place off my body. I entered the shower and turned on the water.

Sylvester joined me, already naked.

“How are you feeling?” He finally asked, and I nodded.

"I am sorry I acted the way I did.." He started, and I pulled him closer to my body. I looked up so I could see his eyes.

"You didn't do anything wrong. I am impressed by your self-control. You are lord, you could have arrested them, and no one would question you." I said and rested my head against his chest.

"I am proud of you," I said, and he wrapped his arms around me and exhaled. I felt sorry for him that his brother would work against him like this.

We left the shower and got dressed. He wanted to go to his office immediately, and I knew it was because of the seal and his signature.

"Sylvester, may I bring up a suggestion?" I told him on his way out, and he nodded.

"I do not know who is doing this to you, but the person either lives in this estate or has people in this estate. I suggest you have a special ink made for your signature." I said, and he smiled at me, but I wasn't done talking yet.

So I walked up to him and placed my hand on his chest.

"I know I am yet to be luna, and I do not know the laws of the north, but I will like you to allow me to help you look into the matter secretly. I might find out things," I requested, hoping he would agree.

I remembered how I used to help Leo with investigations in the east. Although nothing serious like this happened, I knew how it was done.

"Of course, Luna," he said and bent to kiss me on the lips. Then he folded his hands and raised his eyebrow.

"Let's say you were to do this, where will you begin?" he asked, and I giggled.

"Follow the trail of the so-called tax increment document from who delivered it to where they received it, all the way back to its origin. If I could trace it back to its source, we would find the culprit or the accomplice. We might have to go to the west undercover to get the complete picture. I also feel it was dishonest for Alpha Brighton not to tell you about the attack himself. We should look into that, too," I said and sighed.

"I have a long list," I told him, and he looked at me in awe.

“Wow, Tamia,” he said, sounding genuinely impressed.

“Would you mind working with me, Marcel and Theodore on this?” He asked, and I smiled at him.

“I will think about it,” I said, and he smiled and gently brushed my cheek with his hands.

“Try and get some rest,” he told me and walked away.

I wasn't planning to rest. I was planning to make sure he had no opposition during the hearing at the council hall the next day, so as soon as he left, I searched for Stephanie.

I stood at her door and knocked.

“It's open,” I heard her voice, and I walked in.

She was relaxing on a couch with a glass of wine in her hand. She looked in my direction and smiled.

“I was wondering when you would come to see me, Tamia,” She said and motioned me to join her on the couch. She tried to pour me a glass of wine, but I declined. It was a bit too early to drink.

“How was the party?” She asked, and I nodded.

“It was fine until Dominic decided to embarrass Sylvester this morning,” I said, and she frowned at me.

I looked at her with a straight face.

“Who is Larry to Dominic?” I asked her, and she frowned at me.

“Why are you asking me this?” She said, and I sighed.

“Because I do not understand why Dominic will always help Larry work against Sylvester. Today he accused Sylvester of something unscrupulous in the eyes of all the elites,” I said, and she was stunned.

“He accused Sylvester of increasing taxes for poor people, and sending soldiers to attack people that couldn't pay. Who does that to his blood? Does

he not know that the entire Volkov family will lose the Lordship if Sylvester falls?" I asked her, and she was still stunned.

"Dominic is your son, and Sylvester told me he is here because of you. I can overlook many things but not when it would hurt my mate's reputation. I do not like playing dirty, but you need to call your son to order. I won't take it easy if I find out he is setting Sylvester up," I said.

Her eyes showed fear. Stephanie was a woman like me, and she knew what women were capable of. I did not need to be Luna to do damage. Tears were streaming down her face, and she hugged me.

"I appreciate your love for Sylvester. I promise to talk some sense into Dominic, but please don't write him off, Tamia. I know you will be Luna soon; I do not want him to be in your bad books," She said and broke the hug.

"Dominic was his father's favourite, and Larry was one of Maurice's good friends. They are just mad that Sylvester did not get justice for Maurice. Even I am mad about it," She explained, and I shook my head.

"It gives him no right to do what he did this morning. On no account should he side with an outsider against his brother. Sylvester has been summoned for questioning by the council tomorrow. I want you to stop Dominic from attending and complicating matters for Sylvester. Do you think you can do that?" I asked her, and she nodded. Wiping away her tears.

"Thank you," I said with a straight face.

"Now, will you drink that wine?" She asked, and I smiled at her and shook my head.

I did not feel like drinking, and I explained it to her.

She told me a few things about her life with her husband, and I was horrified to learn of the abuse he subjected her to.

The most baffling thing about it was that she didn't see it that way, so I held my peace and did not say anything about it.

I returned to the bedroom in the evening and found Sylvester on the bed staring at the ceiling. He sat up and smiled, but his smile could not fool me. I knew he was troubled.

I went to him, and he pulled me close for a kiss.

“I can feel your anxiety, Sylvester. You need to tell me the real implications of tomorrow’s questioning.” I told him, and he sighed.

He placed his hands in mine and smiled at me.

“If I fail tomorrow, Dominic will get what he wants, and I will be asked to step down. Marcel and Theodore are willing to step down with me.” He said and sighed.

“I do not want it to come to that, but I do not know what they have. If people are plotting against me, then I do not know the angle they will pick,” he said, and I rubbed his back.

“You need to be calm, Sylvester,” I said and squeezed his hand gently.

“You are innocent in this, and we will find the culprit,” I told him, and he nodded.

We left for the council hall in the morning. Marcel and Theodore were in their jeeps, and we joined them in ours. We left the estate in convoy.

Sylvester was a lot calmer after we made love in the shower. I hoped Stephanie kept her promise and did not allow Dominic to come for the hearing; it would leave Larry on his own without support.

Only Dominic could challenge Sylvester; with him out of the way, the questioning would be straightforward. The good part was it could only be done once.

We arrived at the council and were taken to the box where we sat the last time, and it seemed everyone was waiting for us to arrive.

“Welcome, Lord Volkov; we are honoured to have you grace us with your presence,” A woman said, standing up.

I looked at Larry, and he was quiet. I looked at Dominic’s Box, and it was empty. I was glad he did not come.

“With all due respect, your eminence, this is just a hearing; there is no need to bring your fiancée. When she is here, she can partake in these meetings,” The woman said with a straight face.

“Pamela Reeves, my Luna is with me based on my request, and she will also be observing and asking questions based on my request. It will be in your best interest to treat her with the appropriate respect. Bear in mind that I won’t be changing my mind where she is concerned. So this council might as well get used to treating her as the Lady of the north, and my Luna,” he said calmly, and she nodded.

“It has come to our attention that you ordered soldiers to attack the Brighton Pack in the western borders because they could not pay up. You know these people are farmers and can’t afford the development tax. Yet, you ordered an attack on them,” She said, lifting a paper that I was sure had Sylvester’s signature on it.

“Your attack forced them to seek refuge with Bane,” She said and sat down.

Sylvester wanted to respond, but I stopped him. Instead, I stood up, pissed off by what the council was trying to do.

“I would like to ask some questions before Lord Volkov answers your accusations,” I said, and they murmured.

“Let her speak,” Vino said, and I smiled at him.

“Thank you, council leader,” I said, appreciating Vino.

“I was of the notion this was a question and answer situation, not a judgemental situation,” I said, and they murmured.

“I would prefer you use the word alleged when stating the crimes committed, Councilwoman Pamela,” I said, and they were silent.

“First off, I want to ask this council if they questioned the officers that led this battle?” I asked, and they were silent.

“Where did the order come from? Who delivered this letter, and where did they get it from? Who gave it to them? Who collected it from the lord directly? Kindly answer these questions, and his eminence would gladly answer yours,” I said calmly, and they began to murmur.

"I am not trying to create trouble here. I just want to know that that piece of paper came from my mate. Once you can prove it came from him, then we can proceed. Otherwise, I will ask this council to search for who will benefit from this action, who will want to frame his Lordship and who is likely to succeed," I said and sat down.

"Brilliant, Tamia," I heard Marcel's voice through the mind link.

"Good job," I heard Theodore's voice, and Sylvester squeezed my thigh gently.

"Where is Dominic Volkov?" Larry asked, and no one answered.

"What have you done to your brother?" Larry asked Sylvester in anger.

"I will not overlook your disrespect, old man!" Sylvester warned him, and he calmed down.

"I am beginning to suspect you and Dominic did this. If I find out you had a hand in this, I will end you myself. It is a promise, council man Larry," Sylvester said, and Vino stood up.

"I believe we owe his Lordship an apology for summoning him for a question and answer without doing our research," Vino said and bowed to Sylvester. Clearly, he wasn't in support of summoning Sylvester but had to as required of him by the council.

"I apologise on behalf of the council and promise we won't repeat this mistake. Aid will be sent to Brighton, and he will be informed that you had no hand in this, your eminence," he said, and Sylvester told him it was alright.

As much as I was glad about the turn of events, it was best for us to reach out to Brighton and do the needful. I did not trust the council. Only Vino Lawrence seemed to be on Sylvester's side, and we did not know him well enough.

They discussed other matters that involved Bane building an army to come to the north. People wanted Sylvester to send Marcel or Theodore to lead a charge to neutralise him and Leo.

I knew they included Leo because of me.

I knew they were testing my loyalty because Leo hadn't done anything wrong.

I had to hold my tongue and not speak so they do not claim that I was still loyal to my ex-husband and was only using Sylvester.

The emphasis on attacking Leo was so much that Theodore and Marcel caught on and had to shut them up.

One thing we all knew was that Leo was a very peaceful man and would never do anything to hurt or attack anyone. At the end of the hearing, I concluded that we needed to investigate the council

thoroughly.

~Sylvester~

What Tamia did blew me away. She fearlessly came to my defence and put the council in their place. I was blessed.

I looked at Dominic's box and was grateful that he did not come. The hearing would have been difficult if he had shown up. Of everyone, he was the only one that could disrespect me without consequence. It wasn't that I could not deal with him, but I had to respect my mother and not hurt her by hurting him.

Larry seemed disappointed, and I figured he must have planned something with Dominic. I needed to investigate that man. Even though we all knew Dominic did not have the smarts to pull off something of that magnitude, I could not say the same for Larry.

Tamia was right when she asked them if they traced the documents. As much as they wanted to end the conversation after emphasising attacking Bane and Leo, I had to decline their request to end the meeting.

Pamela clamoured on Leo's issue deliberately. She said many things about the eastern alpha while watching Tamia's reaction. I knew what she was trying to prove, but I knew Tamia belonged to me and her heart beat only for me.

"Have you all finished?" I finally spoke, and there was silence. Then Vino stood to speak.

"Yes, we have, your lordship, and we ask to close the meeting," he said, and I shook my head.

"Today isn't a silent day for me," I said, and Vino sat back in his chair.



I looked at Pamela.

“What did you say were alpha Leonardo Albert’s crimes?” I asked her.

“Word has it that he has teamed up with Bane to help build his army, of which they plan on marching up north to overthrow you and take over,” she said with conviction, and I smiled.

“And where did you hear this?” I asked, and she did not look so confident again.

“We must keep our ears to the ground and listen for harmful news that can bring the downfall of our structure.” She explained, and I smiled.

” In other words, it is a rumour,” I said, and she was silent.

“And you ask me to launch an attack against this alpha based on a rumour that has no origin or facts,” I said so she could understand the stupidity of her request.

“I also did not miss that you kept looking at my mate while you made that request,” I said and smiled.

“Let this be the last time this council will try to use Tamia’s ex-husband as bait. It is low and disrespectful. It is stupid and baseless, and I am highly disappointed in all of you.” I said.

“You all called me here for a question and answer session based on baseless allegations. I would have been impressed if you had done your work, but you didn’t.” I said.

“While you are all trying to create an issue out of nothing, there is a serious matter pending that we are yet to discuss,” I said, and they were attentive.

“Who sent Enforcer Bryce Golubev yesterday morning to the east to demand development taxes from Alpha Leonardo? This was done after I told Vino I did not pass that order. Why wasn’t he called back? Why did he threaten the alpha?” I asked, and they were silent.

Tamia was in shock.

I should have told her when she returned to our room yesterday evening, but I was too angry about what the council was doing and worried about how far they were willing to go to say anything to her.

It is a shame that Leo and I can never be friends because I took away his price possession, but I respected the alpha for reaching out instead of reacting.

"I need an answer," I said, and Councilwoman Joan Clayman stood to speak.

"With all due respect, your Lordship, how did you come about this?" she asked, and I smiled.

"Alpha Leo had the heart to reach out to us and enquire about the so-called development tax. I am glad he did not revolt." I said and refused to change the topic.

"I asked a question," I reminded them, and no one spoke, so I looked at Marcel, and he nodded.

Kappa William ushered in the enforcer, and the council members were silent.

"Bryce," Marcel said, and the man knelt and kept his head bowed. He wasn't allowed to look into our eyes, and he knew his place.

"Who gave you the order to go to the east yesterday morning? Who paid for your flight and commissioned the mission?" Marcel asked, and he did not speak.

"If you choose to hold your tongue, you and your family will be tried for treason. Delivering false news in the name of the Wolf lord is treasonous," Marcel warned him, and the man bowed his head.

"I honestly thought the order was genuine. Lord Dominic gave it to me," he said, and people began to murmur.

"When did he give this to you?" I asked him.

"Three nights ago. It had your seal on. I believed it was from your office," he said, and people began to murmur.

I could hear outrage and disappointment in the room.

I was wondering if that was why Dominic did not show up. Did he know we would find out the truth? Was he somehow on the run?

“We need to hunt Dominic down and arrest him. He has a lot of explaining to do.” I linked Marcel and Theodore, and they told me they were already on it.

“Dominic should be arrested,” Pamela said, and I noticed Vino was shocked and silent.

“I looked at Larry, who was equally shocked, but I could not believe his reaction. They could have planned it. He could have as well been the mastermind and planned it with my brother to be the fall guy.

I looked at him and let my eyes linger on his.

“I have no hand in this, Lord Volkov,” he said, and I smiled.

“That is not for you to decide.” I said, and he widened his eyes.

Kappa William and his men moved to arrest Larry.

” You are guilty until proven innocent. Whatever Dominic does reflects on you.” I said, and most of the council members disagreed with me, but I did not care; I was lord after all, it was time to let them know who was truly in charge.

“With that out of the way, I want to use this opportunity to state that the east is a sovereign region, and we will not tax their alpha. I might be the Wolf lord, but the alpha of the east rules the east, likewise that

of the south. As long as they do not declare war, I will not move to attack them. I do not have lives to waste or homes and families to ruin. War might give my seat and this council money and power, expand our lands and strengthen our reach and hold, but it also ruins lives, destroys homes and brings pain and sorrow to people. My father did much of that in his time, creating enemies for the north and my family’s name. His actions led to his death and birthed grudges from all over. I am not here to continue in his footsteps. My time is for healing, peace and prosperity. None of you should try to force my hand against anyone, secretly or openly, or I will see that action as treason,” I said, and they were silent.

I had said my peace and decided to end the discussion.

Vino ended the discussion, and we left.

Tamia sat in the passenger's seat of the Jeep, a bit silent. It was clear that she was baffled about something. I decided to wait until we got home so we could discuss it.

I also wanted to reward her for her bravery and for coming to my aid.

She was the best.

Every day that passes, I fight with myself and Knight not to go against tradition and claim her. We had two more months to go, but it felt like forever. I wanted to be one with her now.

I touched her lap, and she smiled at me.

"I am glad that went well," she said, and I nodded.

"Thanks to you, darling; you deserve a reward for it," I said and ran my palm up her thigh. She opened her legs to grant me access, and I could smell her arousal. Knight growled in my head, and I swayed.

"Focus," she teased, and I looked at the car in front of us, contemplating if I should park and take her. I decided against it last minute and overtook Theodore and Marcel's Jeep. I needed to get home in a hurry.

I parked at the estate's entrance and made Tamia alight the Jeep so we could rush in.

I did not speak to anyone, and it made her giggle.

I entered our bedroom and crashed my lips against hers.

I was about to get into it when someone began to bang on my door.

"Sylvester, how could you!" I heard my mother's voice, and I knew why.

I grumbled, let Tamia down and zipped up my fly.

She giggled, and I was slightly annoyed that my mother would bang on my door the way she did.

I opened the door, and she walked into my bedroom and slapped me.

There was silence in the room.

I could tolerate her doing that, but I had warned her against hitting me. She tried to send another one, and I held her hand and roared at her. Tamia held me from behind to calm down. Tears were streaming down my mother's face.

"Why did you arrest your brother? I did as Tamia instructed and stopped him from attending the hearing; why lock him up?" she said, and I turned to look at Tamia.

I was surprised that she arranged it without telling me. She knew, and her eyes pleaded with me.

"Did you instruct my mother to keep Dominic?" I asked Tamia, and she nodded.

"I did. I did it for you. You were worried about him and Larry working against you. He was the only one that could challenge you, so I asked her to stop him from attending.." She said, and I knew she meant well. However wrong her actions were, I knew she meant well; it showed in her eyes.

Even though I was mad about the implications of her actions, I could not scold her in the presence of anyone. I turned back to my mother.

"You threatened to deal with my son, Tamia, so I held him back. Why then this? The soldiers dragged him out of his room in silver chains like a criminal," she said in tears, and I did not know what to say. I looked at Tamia, and she could not speak, which meant that conversation had taken place.

"Dominic forged my signature and seal and sent Bryce to threaten Alpha Leonardo," I said, but my mother shook her head. She refused to listen to me. She was too hurt to understand what I had just said. Instead, she wept.

~Sylvester~

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Tamia was in shock.

I should have told her when she returned to our room yesterday evening, but I was too angry about what the council was doing and worried about how far they were willing to go to say anything to her.

It is a shame that Leo and I can never be friends because I took away his price possession, but I respected the alpha for reaching out instead of reacting.

“I need an answer,” I said, and Councilwoman Joan Clayman stood to speak.

“With all due respect, your Lordship, how did you come about this?” she asked, and I smiled.

“Alpha Leo had the heart to reach out to us and enquire about the so-called development tax. I am glad he did not revolt.” I said and refused to change the topic.

“I asked a question,” I reminded them, and no one spoke, so I looked at Marcel, and he nodded.

Kappa William ushered in the enforcer, and the council members were silent.

“Bryce,” Marcel said, and the man knelt and kept his head bowed. He wasn’t allowed to look into our eyes, and he knew his place.

” Who gave you the order to go to the east yesterday morning? Who paid for your flight and commissioned the mission?” Marcel asked, and he did not speak.

“If you choose to hold your tongue, you and your family will be tried for treason. Delivering false news in the name of the Wolf lord is treasonous,” Marcel warned him, and the man bowed his head.

“I honestly thought the order was genuine. Lord Dominic gave it to me,” he said, and people began to murmur.

“When did he give this to you?” I asked him.

“Three nights ago. It had your seal on. I believed it was from your office,” he said, and people began to murmur.

I could hear outrage and disappointment in the room.

I was wondering if that was why Dominic did not show up. Did he know we would find out the truth? Was he somehow on the run?

“We need to hunt Dominic down and arrest him. He has a lot of explaining to do.” I Linked Marcel and Theodore, and they told me they were already on it.

“Dominic should be arrested,” Pamela said, and I noticed Vino was shocked and silent.

“I looked at Larry, who was equally shocked, but I could not believe his reaction. They could have planned it. He could have as well been the mastermind and planned it with my brother to be the fall guy. I

I looked at him and let my eyes linger on his.

“I have no hand in this, Lord Volkov,” he said, and I smiled.

“That is not for you to decide.” I said, and he widened his eyes.

Kappa William and his men moved to arrest Larry.



"You are guilty until proven innocent. Whatever Dominic does reflects on you." I said, and most of the council members disagreed with me, but I did not care; I was lord after all, it was time to let them know who was truly in charge.

"With that out of the way, I want to use this opportunity to state that the east is a sovereign region, and we will not tax their alpha. I might be the Wolf lord, but the alpha of the east rules the east, likewise that

of the south. As long as they do not declare war, I will not move to attack them. I do not have lives to waste or homes and families to ruin. War might give my seat and this council money and power, expand our lands and strengthen our reach and hold, but it also ruins lives, destroys homes and brings pain and sorrow to people. My father did much of that in his time, creating enemies for the north and my family's name. His actions led to his death and birthed grudges from all over. I am not here to continue in his footsteps. My time is for healing, peace and prosperity. None of you should try to force my hand against anyone, secretly or openly, or I will see that action as treason," I said, and they were silent.

I had said my peace and decided to end the discussion.

Vino ended the discussion, and we left.

Tamia sat in the passenger's seat of the Jeep, a bit silent. It was clear that she was baffled about something. I decided to wait until we got home so we could discuss it.

I also wanted to reward her for her bravery and for coming to my aid.

She was the best.

Every day that passes, I fight with myself and Knight not to go against tradition and claim her. We had two more months to go, but it felt like forever. I wanted to be one with her now.

I touched her lap, and she smiled at me.

"I am glad that went well," she said, and I nodded.

“Thanks to you, darling; you deserve a reward for it,” I said and ran my palm up her thigh. She opened her legs to grant me access, and I could smell her arousal. Knight growled in my head, and I swayed.

“Focus,” she teased, and I looked at the car in front of us, contemplating if I should park and take her. I decided against it last minute and overtook Theodore and Marcel’s Jeep. I needed to get home in a hurry.

I parked at the estate’s entrance and made Tamia alight the Jeep so we could rush in.

I did not speak to anyone, and it made her giggle.

I entered our bedroom and crashed my lips against hers.

I was about to get into it when someone began to bang on my door.

“Sylvester, how could you!” I heard my mother’s voice, and I knew why.

I grumbled, let Tamia down and zipped up my fly.

She giggled, and I was slightly annoyed that my mother would bang on my door the way she did.

I opened the door, and she walked into my bedroom and slapped me.

There was silence in the room.

I could tolerate her doing that, but I had warned her against hitting me. She tried to send another one, and I held her hand and roared at her. Tamia held me from behind to calm down. Tears were streaming down my mother’s face.

” Why did you arrest your brother? I did as Tamia instructed and stopped him from attending the hearing; why lock him up?” she said, and I turned to look at Tamia.

I was surprised that she arranged it without telling me. She knew, and her eyes pleaded with me.

“Did you instruct my mother to keep Dominic?” I asked Tamia, and she nodded.

"I did. I did it for you. You were worried about him and Larry working against you. He was the only one that could challenge you, so I asked her to stop him from attending.." She said, and I knew she meant well. However wrong her actions were, I knew she meant well; it showed in her eyes.

Even though I was mad about the implications of her actions, I could not scold her in the presence of anyone. I turned back to my mother.

"You threatened to deal with my son, Tamia, so I held him back. Why then this? The soldiers dragged him out of his room in silver chains like a criminal," she said in tears, and I did not know what to say. I looked at Tamia, and she could not speak, which meant that conversation had taken place.

" Dominic forged my signature and seal and sent Bryce to threaten Alpha Leonardo," I said, but my mother shook her head. She refused to listen to me. She was too hurt to understand what I had just said. Instead, she wept.

~Tamia~

Avery and Linda arrived in my room a few minutes after they had linked me.

They sat on the couch while I dressed up in Sylvester's clothes.

What happened with his mother baffled me, and I was nervous about what to expect from the woman.

The switch was disturbing, and somehow I knew it would not be easy onwards.

I did not need to guess whose side Sylvester was on. Stephanie had picked a dangerous game because I was bound to win.

I joined Avery and Linda on the couch, then linked the staff to serve us tea and biscuits.

"What is with Stephanie?" Avery asked me, looking curious.

"She was drinking in the lounge of this wing, and we went to say hello. She was very nasty to us. Calling us whores, backstabbers, thieves, name it, Tamia. She looked like she was out of it," Avery said, and I sighed sadly.

“She is unhappy about what happened with Dominic and believes I was the mastermind behind his arrest. I am officially her enemy now,” I said, and Linda hissed.

“That is pathetic and silly. What do you have to gain from that? You already have it all. You will be the lady of the north in two months. Sylvester is indisputably yours. She is silly,” Linda said, sounding irritated.

“Actually, I did ask her to make sure that Dominic does not show up at the hearing, and I did imply that I will go against him if he troubles Sylvester,” I confessed, and Linda rolled her eyes.

“So what? The asshole deserves it and much more. Sometimes I suspect she didn’t give birth to Sylvester because of the way she is quick to side with Dominic against him, even if Dominic is in the wrong, and that douchebag is always in the wrong. I think it is an odd situation. I can understand favouritism, but this is too damn much. Screw her. We do not need her as our friend.” Linda said, and I giggled

Linda made a lot of sense, but I knew Stephanie was Sylvester’s mother.

“She disagrees with Sylvester’s policies. She wanted him to get justice for her husband. She wanted him to expand..” I said, and Avery began to laugh, interrupting me in the process.

“Really, who will get justice for all the people her husband wronged? Her husband ruined lives and wrecked homes. Bane is a hero. I do not care what people say,” Avery said, and I covered her mouth.

“Please do not say things like that. The walls have ears, and we do not want Stephanie to have anything against us.” I said, and Linda laughed.

Just then, Nancy walked in with our tea and biscuits, and I was worried she might have heard Avery. She was about to leave when I stopped her.

“I am sorry for what I am about to do, Nancy, but I will need you to taste the food. A lot is happening right now, and I am just being careful,” I said, and Nancy smiled.

“It is alright, Luna,” she said, tasted our teas, and ate our biscuits.

She stood for about ten minutes before I apologised and dismissed her.

“What was that about?” Avery asked, biting into her biscuit.

I placed the tea by my nose, and the scent was a bit strong, so I put it down and opted to drink the cranberry variation instead of the black tea.

“Stephanie hates us, and she was married to a psycho. I do not want to make mistakes,” I said, and Linda laughed.

“What is wrong with the tea?” Avery asked me, and I shook my head.

“The smell is a bit too strong this afternoon. I wonder if the brand is what we are used to. I will ask Nancy.” I said, and she nodded and opted to take the cranberry variation, too; likewise, Linda.

“So, who do you think it is?” Avery asked me the real reason they had come.

“I doubt it is Dominic; I think someone set him up to throw us off their scent. He is the most obvious culprit. It is just too easy,” I said, and Linda laughed.

“Sometimes life can be easy, and the truth might really be what it is. Just look at how easily we found love again,” she said, and I nodded.

“I am not disputing the fact that he might have a hand in this. Possibly, he did it, but he was too stupid to cover his tracks. It is a possibility, but between Brighton’s attack and this, it does not seem like the same person.” I said, and Avery nodded.

” I agree, but it still does not mean Dominic is innocent. He might have miscalculated or tried to copy the original crime hoping it would go a certain way,” she said, and it made a lot of sense.

“Dominic was desperate to take over from his brother. The issue with Brighton must have given him the idea to try to replicate the same scenario with an alpha alleged to have teamed up with the enemy of the north. Either way, it would be a winning situation; it would have caused a war or forced Sylvester to step down.” I said, and Linda frowned.

“But if Sylvester steps down, it would leave the Volkov’s line and go to the Sidorovs, then the Orlovs. If neither Marcel nor Theodore cuts it, the north will have to choose between Dominic and Vino to lead

them. Neither of them is an alpha, but they would likely lean towards Dominic.” Linda said, and I nodded.

“You can put it that way, but we also have to consider Dominic’s friendship with Larry. Larry is the eldest on the council. He hates Sylvester and believes Dominic should take over from him. The man must have assured Dominic that he would force the council to endorse him. In exchange, Dominic will be his puppet and wage war, increase the power of the seat and the council and enrich the north,” I said, and they were silent.

“So, how is Sylvester handling it?” Avery asked, and I could not answer that question because I did not know.

“I think we should investigate this thing like we used to do back in the east,” Linda said.

“I do not think Theodore would want you to get involved,” I said, and she rolled her eyes. She wanted to do this for the thrill.

” Let us bring it up during dinner,” I said to them, and Avery agreed.

I decided to tell them what I really wanted.

“I know this might sound crazy.” I began, and everyone was attentive.

“It might even be unnecessary. There might be nothing to it,” I said and sighed.

“But we need to investigate Stephanie,” I said, and Avery frowned.

“Why? The woman is clearly unstable and a psycho, but that would be a waste of time because she would not want to work against her sons. There is no way she would set either of them up. She is also a victim in this,” Avery said, and I nodded at my friend.

“I am not asking that we investigate her because of the event. She has no hand in this and can never actively work against her son. But I need to know what she has in store for Sylvester. She is always quick to side with Dominic against him, and there is that issue of Sylvester not wanting to get the revenge she wanted so badly. I need to protect my man from a woman that is hurting and trying to lash out.” I said and sighed.

"He told her to get out," I confessed, and Linda gasped.

"And he sided with me against her. You needed to see the rage and scorn on her face when she realised he wouldn't back her up. She said many implicating things that she only got away with because Sylvester is her son. There is no way Stephanie is going to let what happened today go. No matter what happens, I need to be a step ahead of her, and I need help," I said, and Linda smiled.

Just then, I felt nauseous and rushed to the bathroom to vomit.

"What is the matter with you?" Linda asked me, and they joined me in the bathroom. Other than the tea and biscuits I ingested, there was nothing in my stomach. So when I threw everything up, I sat by the toilet seat, heaving.

Avery poured cold water overhead, and I sighed with relief because I was burning up.

"What is wrong with you?" Linda asked, looking concerned, and I shook my head

"I guess I am reacting to something in the tea or biscuits. It might also be because of the up-and-down feeling today. Everything has been crazy." I said, feeling better.

"Maybe you should rest," Avery said, and we left the bathroom and went back to the couch.

We talked about other things, watched a movie, and then they left.

Sylvester returned thirty minutes after they left, looking very angry and troubled.

He went to the bathroom immediately, and even though I wanted to join him, I wasn't feeling that great.

He lingered in the bathroom before coming to bed.

"Are we not going for dinner?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

He looked at me and held my hand.

“You look pale,” he said with concern, and I smiled at him and caressed his cheeks gently.

“And you look tensed,” I said, and he smiled at me and pulled me into his arms.

I placed my head against his chest, and he wrapped his arms around me. I felt his uneasiness, and I knew the issue with his brother troubled him.

“You need to be calm, darling. I know you care about Dominic, and I pray he is innocent too, but you need to be calm,” I said, and he kissed the top of my head.

“I want you to join me in questioning him and Larry tomorrow. Do you think you are up for it?” He asked me, and I looked at him with a broad smile.

“That will be amazing. It will be more fun than anything I have been doing since I got here,” I said, and he frowned at me, his dark eyes flashing. I wondered what I said to make Knight jealous.

“More fun than making love?” he asked, and I smiled broadly, shaking my head.

“No, definitely not,” I said, and he smiled and tickled me.

“Did my mother come to this room after I left?” he asked, and I shook my head.

“We are definitely now enemies. I doubt she will come here knowing you aren’t here,” I said, and he nodded.

“She has taken a short trip, and for some reason, I am nervous because it has to do with Dominic,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Avery and Linda said they saw her in the lounge a few hours ago,” I said, and he nodded.

“The alcohol must have given her a bright idea,” he said, and it did not sit well with me.

A desperate woman would do anything. Stephanie’s judgement could not be trusted at the moment.



“Did you have her followed?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

“I doubt I need to have her followed, Tamia. She is just angry. Besides, she is my mother. I can’t treat her like a suspect in a crime,” he said, and I nodded even though I disagreed with him.

I honestly wished he had her followed. Deep down, I doubted her trip had anything to do with Dominic’s freedom.

After hearing what Avery told me she said to them on their way to my room, I knew she believed I had masterminded everything.

She had also implied that my position with Sylvester wasn’t a given and that two months was time enough for things to change. I wondered what my new antagonist had in store for me. I prayed silently for the strength to overcome.

~Tamia~

Morning came, and Sylvester and I got ready for breakfast.

It was going to be a busy day, but I was not feeling up to it.

I was a bit tired even though we didn’t do anything and I had just woken up from sleep.

I did not think much of it and just got ready quietly.

Once we were done getting ready, we went to the dining room to have breakfast.

Everyone was there as always, and we ate in silence.

What happened with Dominic had brought gloom into our lives. I hoped the matter was solved quickly.

I prayed it did not linger because we all deserved better.

Our love was still young; we were still getting to know each other and trying to manoeuvre through our differences to accept them and make it work. This matter needed to be solved as soon as possible.

“Tamia will be accompanying us to question Dominic and Larry,” Sylvester announced, and Marcel nodded.

“I want Avery to come with us too,” Marcel said, and Sylvester didn’t seem okay with it, but he did not complain.

Theodore requested to bring Linda along, and I touched Sylvester’s lap to stop him from making a scene.

I could not really eat, so I just pushed my food about the plate picking the bits and stalling for breakfast to be over.

We finished, and Sylvester decided to go to the cells on the property to question Dominic.

As we moved towards the place, I remembered when Dominic attacked my friends and me and locked us up because of councilwoman Jenny’s death and the attack on his mother.

I was still baffled why the attackers spared Stephanie’s life. It really didn’t add up.

When we got there, we noticed Dominic outside his cell in chains standing with some officers.

“What is going on here?” Sylvester growled. He was angry.

“What is the council task force doing here?” he asked, and the men saluted him and bowed their heads immediately.

“Your eminence, the council has ordered that we move him to the council prison,” One of them said.

“Under whose orders and why?” Sylvester asked.

“It was a collective decision by all council members. The act of treason is judged and punished by the council,” The man said and handed Sylvester a paper.

Sylvester did not bother to read the piece of paper. He just tore it.

“Out of my house now!” he ordered them, and they shook; even I shook because there was an authority in his voice.

We let them leave, and Sylvester’s Kappas ushered Dominic to a room.

We followed, and as soon as Dominic sat down, he looked at Sylvester.

“What would you gain in this? You already have it all. Why lock me up? First, your woman threatened mother to keep me at home, and now I am being tried for treason. What happened to you, Sylvester? We used to fight, but nothing like this,” He said with disbelief, and I could see he was genuinely hurt.

“It stopped being fair when you decided to forge my signature and seal and send Bryce to stir up shit in the east. You knew the development tax issue was false, yet you still chose to use that same method to cause trouble for me. Why?” Sylvester asked him, and he looked at me.

“Do not look at Tamia; focus on me, Dominic. I need to know why you would actively work against me,” he said, and Dominic’s eyes welled up with tears.

“If I tell you my truth, would you believe me?” Dominic asked, and Sylvester did not respond.

“Answer me!” Sylvester growled at his brother. The pressure was overwhelming, making me nauseous, but I held it. Beads of sweat formed on my forehead, and my vision was a bit blurry, but I tried to keep it together.

“I did not give anything to Bryce. He is lying against me, Sylvester. Mother asked me before she left to get help, and I told her the same thing. I did not do this. I have never given Bryce anything or sent him on an errand before. I was stunned when I was arrested, and his name came up as my accomplice.” Dominic said to his brother.

“Why would Bryce lie against you?” Sylvester asked, and Dominic looked at me.

“She wants to be rid of me. Can’t you see what she is doing? Mother told me how you treated her and insulted her because of this woman. Did it ever occur to you that she and her so-called ex might be trying to divide the strength of the north? Bryce might have collected money or something from Leo and Bane to do this. They need a reason to go to war. They might have done this to try to create the opportunity to attack. Do you not think it is weird she would just fall in love with you and want to spend the rest of her life with you? All three of you are blind. You destroyed their homes and took them away

from their mates. No matter how fucked up their marriage situation was, you

can't dispute that they loved their mates. Do not let them turn you against your people, Sylvester. I might be a douchebag, and you and I might not see eye to eye on many things, but I did not do this. I did not send Bryce anywhere. I do not know why he will speak my name," Dominic said and bowed.

"Your explanation isn't good enough for me, Dominic. I will give you time to think about things, and then I will return. If you do not tell me the truth, I will hand you over to the council and wash my hands off the case," Sylvester told him calmly.

"Mother was right when she said she needed to go get help because she doubted you would help me, since your woman controls you now," Dominic said, looking at me scornfully.

"Matter of fact, she is right. I am a fool for my mate, and it will always be that way. You are lucky she isn't evil or vindictive. You wouldn't have been here if that was the case," Sylvester told Dominic, and tears streamed down Dominic's face.

"I didn't do this, little brother. I swear on my wolf and everything I hold dear that I did not do this. Someone or some people are trying to set me up. Please do not let them win," he pleaded with Sylvester in tears, and somehow I suspected the man was telling the truth.

It broke my heart to see them like this.

I decided I would come and speak to him alone.

"Let us go," Sylvester said and turned his back.

"Please, Sylvester, I am begging you," Dominic said in tears.

"The punishment of treason is death. I didn't do this," he pleaded, and I placed a hand over Sylvester's shoulder.

"You can't leave him here unprotected. He could be telling the truth. If he is, the culprits might try to finish the job," I linked him, and Sylvester looked at me. His eyes lingered on me, and he looked at Dominic and then at Marcel.

"Lock him in a protection cell," He ordered Marcel and led me out.

I noticed we were heading for the exit, and Marcel and Theodore were not behind us.

“where are we going?” I asked Sylvester.

“To see Larry,” he said, and I shook my head.

“I doubt it will yield anything,” I said, and he frowned.

“We are at a dead end. I need to know who is who in this, Tamia. My reputation and the peace of our world are at stake here,” He said, and I pulled him close to me. I could feel his panic.

~Devin~

I was sitting in my office when my beta, Lukman, walked into my office to announce Alpha Jake Brighton’s arrival. I thought my business with his pack was over. What was he doing in my pack? I did not want to seem rude, but I wasn’t in the mood for a guest.

“Let him in,” I told my beta.

Alpha Brighton walked into my office smiling, and I wondered what the occasion was.

“Good afternoon, Bane,” he said, and I plastered a fake smile on my face to avoid being rude.

“Hello, Brighton,” I told him, and he nodded and sat down without me offering him a seat. The man made himself comfortable.

“To what do I owe this visit?” I asked him, wanting to get straight to the point, and he sighed.

“I was laying on my bed last night thinking of how to improve my people’s lives when an idea popped into my head,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Shouldn’t you be discussing that with Volkov?” I asked, and he had an angry scowl on his face.

“I can never discuss my people with that bastard. He has done enough,” he said, and I wasn’t comfortable with his words. As much as I wanted to dissolve the rule of the north, I wasn’t comfortable having such a conversation.

Jake noticed and frowned at me.

“Did I come on a bad day?” he asked, and I wanted to say yes, but I shook my head and smiled at him.

I couldn't be happy or enthusiastic about anything. There were just two months left to the blue moon. If I don't do anything and Sylvester claims Tamia, I would have to kill him to get her back. I hope she isn't in love with him. I needed to do something quickly.

“Care to elaborate?” I finally said, wanting to be rid of the man.

He smiled, adjusted his seat, and then looked at my shelf where I had drinks.

I deliberately didn't offer him anything because I did not want to stand up.

“If you want some, you can pour yourself a glass,” I said, and he smiled and went to pour himself a glass of brandy. He took a sip and returned to sit down.

“I know what you did for my people was from the kindness of your heart, and I appreciate it,” he started, and I was attentive.

“I was hoping you could allow my people to work in your region. Mostly part-time odd jobs in construction and the factories,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“The income and experience will help develop my people, and if things get worse with the north, we can abandon our lands and settle down in your region as members of your pack. I am willing to let go of my leadership for the sake of my people,” he said, and I knew he was serious.

I had to respect the love he had for his people.

“I do not think that will be possible in the south because we are highly populated,” I said, and his smile dropped.

“But,” I added, and there was hope in his eyes.

“I plan on visiting Leonardo Albert in the east. They have land and jobs. Your people will be able to settle and work there. He might even give you land to use to lead your people.” I said, and he frowned at me.

“Are you his friend?” he asked, feeling awkward about my suggestion.

“We are acquainted, and I know they need people for manual labour due to the current issues they had with the north and the fact that some of their people have moved to the south,” I told him, and he smiled at me.

“When do you plan to visit him?” he asked, and I sighed.

“I have an appointment for tomorrow. Mind you, I have an issue to discuss with him already, so you will have to table your matter yourself,” I told him, and he nodded.

“What time do you leave for the east tomorrow?” he asked

“Ten in the morning. Mountain Pack isn’t far from Greenwood. I will be there in two hours.” I told him, and he nodded and stood up.

“I will return by eight tomorrow so we can leave for the place together.” He said, and I nodded.

Morning came, and Jake Brighton arrived earlier than eight. I knew he was desperate. I could see his desperation, and I hoped Leo would ease his mind and put a smile on his face.

The people of Brighton needed a break. It was sad I couldn’t give them that.

We arrived at Mountain on time. I expected Leo was waiting for me in his office. I had to commend the man for being civil.

We were offered drinks, and I opted to drink water instead. Beta Casper took us to Leo’s office, but I asked Jake to wait so I could speak to Leo privately.

I entered Leo’s office, and he was looking bedraggled. His beard had overgrown, and he had dark circles. I could tell he was not sleeping, but it wasn’t my business.

“To what do I owe this visit, Alpha Devin?” He said. I did not know if he was in the right mood to discuss my concerns. I knew Tamia was the reason for his appearance. I did not understand why he did not treat her well when they were together. He must have thought she would always be with him hence why he accepted Amanda. It was his loss.

“Alpha Leo,” I said.

"I do not know where to begin, but I need your help," I added, and he was attentive.

"I do not know how good your relationship is with Volkov, but I need you to help me inform Tamia that she is my fated," I said, and he exclaimed.

I knew I sounded like a madman, and it wasn't far from the truth, but I needed her to know so she would know that her fated was out there and he was waiting for her. I was hopeful that would buy me time.

"I do not think that will be possible. She is Sylvester's property now. I, too, wish I could take her back, but we both know the Wolf Lord never lets go of his trophies." He said, and I realised he had not heard of the wedding.

"I am desperate. Please help me. My wolf and I have been suffering. You know what it is like. You have a fated. Every day I lay awake wishing I had taken her away from that dinner and dealt with the consequences later. That way, she would have been mine, and Sylvester wouldn't have her because

she wouldn't be in the east to begin with. Please, Leo, I will give anything for you to tell her the truth about me," I pleaded desperately, and he leaned forward.

"Why are you desperate? I told you Sylvester sounded possessive of her. I doubt he will let her go. She is his trophy. The best advice I could give you is to try and visit their annual sports in four months. The trophies are allowed to attend. I plan on attending so I can see her too. She no longer bears my mark. She would recognise you, and then both of you can decide..." he said, but I interrupted him and shook my head.

"I do not have that much time, Leo," I said and bowed.

"Sylvester will marry and claim her on the blue moon night. They have celebrated their engagement," I said, and he exclaimed. I looked at him. His hands were shaking, and tears formed in his eyes immediately. It was clear he had not let go, and I had come to the wrong person for help.

"What?" he said in a low voice. I could hardly make out the sound if it weren't for the fact that I could read lips.

"They are getting married, Leo. I am desperate." I said.



“In that case, I will advise you to let her go,” he said, and I shook my head and banged my hand on the table.

“Don’t ask me to do what you couldn’t do, Leo. I just want you to help me.” I pleaded, my hands shaking.

“Please, I will give anything..” I said, and he shook his head.

“Did it occur to you that she is in love with him and wants to spend the rest of her life with him? Tamia isn’t the type to be forced into a union. I can’t take that bliss from her by telling her about you. I can’t. I know what happened to me with Amanda. My bliss was taken from me the moment I caught Amanda’s scent. It ruined my perfect life. It ruined everything that I held dear, Devin. I can’t allow Tamia to go through that kind of turmoil. It is easy to chase after your fated if you aren’t in love, but it is torture when you have already given your heart to another. No matter how strong the pull was, I could not stop loving Tamia.

I still love her, and I always will. If she is getting married to Sylvester, I will advise you to reject the bond and let her be. Please. She does not need to be torn between her heart’s desire and fate. It wasn’t easy for me; I do not want her to have the same experience,” he pleaded with me. Although the news seemed to break his heart, he was still looking out for her.

“I can’t let her be. I can’t,” I told him my truth, and he sighed.

“Then I wish you the best, but I won’t help you to mess Tamia up,” I told him, and I was mad that he would see my plea as an attempt to mess Tamia up. I did not understand his logic, but I knew he was still hurting. I had come to the wrong person for help. There was no way he would help me get with Tamia. He was selfish like that.

Jake Brighton was ushered into Leo’s office, and he explained his matter to Leo.

“Why haven’t you taken your idea to the north? I am sure the Wolf Lord will have a solution,” Leo said, repeating my words, and Jake got angry.

“I can never go to that bastard for help. He imposed development tax on my people and then sent his enforcers to attack my people when we couldn’t pay,” he said, and Leo shook his head.

“I do not think you should be quick to judge. I do not know what is happening in the north, but I doubt the Wolf lord did that to you. Two days ago, enforcers came here with a written order that we are to pay development taxes henceforth or face the consequences. I panicked, but my beta talked some sense into me. I called the Lord’s office, and his beta was shocked. They never passed such an order. I

believe the issue was from the council. There is a possibility he doesn’t know of the attack on your people.” He said, and Jake shook his head.

” He is marrying your ex-wife. He wouldn’t want her to see him as a monster by taxing and attacking her people.” Brighton said, making a valid point, and Leo sighed.

“Very well. I still doubt the lord had something to do with it, but I am willing to offer your people part- time jobs. I cannot let them settle here because you are under the north, and I do not want trouble with the north,” he said.

Jake was happy about Leo’s response. It was clear he wasn’t expecting to get anything from it, but Leo came through.

I thanked Leo for his time, even though he did not agree to help me. I understood his position but could not give up on my fated.

Jake and I returned to Greenwood, and I teased him about his pack being named after his last name, and he found it funny.

“It was a settlement, and my ancestor was the alpha. It was called Brighton’s pack, and as they grew, the settlement became a village, and it was named after the pack,” he explained, and I laughed. I knew he would soon retire, which was why he was taking all the steps necessary to secure his people and help his son rule with ease. I had to commend him for it. I would have been happier if my father had been as strong as him.

Jake’s wife was taken from him by Lord Maurice Volkov. They were only nineteen when it happened, but he held firm for the sake of their twins and was still holding firm. I respected the man greatly.

“I would like you to visit Brighton, so I can host you, Devin. You have been most kind to us. I want my son and daughter to meet you. I think you can come and unwind in Brighton. We might not be developed, but our environment is serene and good for the soul,” he said, and it sounded like a

good idea because I needed to think, and I couldn't do that with my mind muddled up.

~Tamia~

I could feel Sylvester's uneasiness about my trip to the western village. I did not know how to tell him I could never leave him.

After our discussion, he insisted that we visit Larry.

He wanted to get to the bottom of the matter, and I needed to figure out how to stop him from wasting his time.

I was feeling nauseous, so I went to the bathroom to throw up my stomach's content.

Sylvester rushed to the bathroom, a bit worried. He carried me to the shower and turned on the water while he took off my clothes.

"I noticed you were slightly warm last night but didn't think much of it. Now you are burning up. What is happening?" he asked me calmly, and I could see he was fighting every fibre of his being from acting out.

"It started after we had tea and biscuits yesterday afternoon. I threw it all up and felt better, but the nausea is back," I managed. The water was soothing, and I wanted to stay under it.

"Who served the snacks?" He asked, and I knew what he wanted to imply, so I shook my head.

"I doubt they did anything to the food, darling. I made the person that served it taste it," I said, withholding the person's name, and he was silent. Once I was calm, he carried me to the bed.

"You can't go to Brighton tomorrow in this condition," he said, and I smiled because I was already feeling better.

"Nice try, Alpha," I said and touched his nose. He did not smile.

"Let me call the doctor?" he said, and I knew how important going to Brighton was, so I shook my head and sat up, pretending to be strong.

"I feel better. You will be wasting your time. I believe the stress caused it, and something might have irritated my stomach from breakfast. Come on. Let us visit Larry." I said, and he frowned at me for a bit before finally accepting.

We got dressed and left the room. The moment we walked past Stephanie's room, I became nervous.

"Where do you think your mother went to?" I asked, and Sylvester shook his head.

"I do not know, and honestly, I can't be bothered. No matter who she brings to plead with me to let Dominic go, I won't listen. Sadly, she does not understand the gravity of Dominic's offence," he said, and I touched his hands.

"I do not think your brother did it, Sylvester. I believe him. He is too proud to beg like that. Someone wants him to take the fall. We need to question Bryce, not Larry, and you must ensure the council does not get their hands on Dominic. If they do, he would be found guilty. I doubt they would go through the stress of finding the truth. See how they handled the matter that concerned you. They did not do any investigation to figure out what was going on. They tried to blame you for the crime. They are either a bunch of lazy idiots or against the Volkov family and want you to step down by all means. Which is why you can't let them lay their hands on him." I said, and he pulled me close as we walked.

"If my mother only knew you meant well," he said and stopped to kiss the top of my head. Then he looked into my eyes and caressed my chin.

"Do not get your hopes up, green eyes. Dominic might disappoint you," he said, and I smiled at him.

We left the mansion, and a Jeep was waiting at the entrance.

We drove to Lucland silently, and Stephanie's trip did not sit well with me. I doubted she was going to get help. Whatever she planned on doing was extreme, and I knew it had to do with me.

I could not understand why the woman would blame me for this. I might have overstepped when I went to ask her to keep her son at home, and I might have said some things that scared her, but I have done nothing wrong.

I was troubled, and so was Kaira. Stephanie wasn't a good enemy to have.

Even though Sylvester had sided with me against her, and I knew she couldn't make him change his mind about me, I did not want their relationship to be damaged.

I remembered all the good times we had had with Stephanie and wondered if she had been pretending all along. I doubted it, though, because she seemed genuine. She loses her mind whenever it has to do with Dominic, and I needed to know why.

We arrived at the Northern prisons, and to my surprise, Sylvester asked to see Bryce instead of Larry.

"You changed your mind?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

"I want us to see Bryce first, and then we can check on Larry," he said, smiling, and I smiled back.

I could see he was stressed and worried, but he hid it well.

It wasn't easy knowing that faceless and nameless people were plotting against him.

I just hope he handles the pressure well.

We were led to an interrogation room.

The smell of the disinfectant they used to clean the place filled my nose, and I felt sick but held it. I knew if I showed any sign of sickness, Sylvester won't allow me to go to Brighton.

"May I have a glass of cold water?" I linked Sylvester, and he frowned at me. I smiled at him, so he won't think anything was wrong.

"Thirsty", I whispered, and he nodded.

Four chairs were in the room, and one was welded to a desk. I figured that was for the prisoner. I sat on one of the free chairs while Sylvester paced.

The water came, and it was freezing. Drinking it made me feel better. Bryce was ushered in a few minutes later and kept his eyes bowed.

"Look up," I ordered him to look into his eyes.

He refused until Sylvester ordered him to.

“You do whatever she tells you,” he warned the man, and he apologised to me.

“Explain how Dominic sent you the order.” Sylvester said, and Bryce looked down.

“Look up!” I ordered the man I went to stand beside Sylvester.

I doubted the man would tell the truth, but I needed to see his eyes.

“He called me to come to the estate. Then he handed the document to me and told me that his eminence wanted me to carry out the task quickly. That the east is supposed to pay development tax, and if they refuse, I should use force.” he said, and Sylvester looked at him.

“Was he the one that asked you to request development tax from Brighton too?” Sylvester asked, but I doubted that was the right question because the council-owned up to it.

“That order came from the council”, he said, and I now understood what Sylvester was doing. He wanted to gauge his reaction. He wanted to understand how he behaved when he told the truth and compare it to his mannerisms when he spoke of his dealings with Dominic. Sylvester was a master.

“Tell me how Dominic called you. When he called, and the time and day you went to the estate?” Sylvester asked, and the man swallowed.

“He called me in the evening, and I went there an hour after his call. This happened five days ago,” he said, and Sylvester was satisfied, but I wasn’t.

“You were right, Tamia; he is lying,” Sylvester linked me.

This wasn’t Sylvester’s duty. His office places him higher than this. They would normally send Kappa William or kappa Wilson to do this. Sylvester must care for his brother to do it himself.

Although Sylvester had figured out the man was lying, Sylvester’s conviction was not enough to free Dominic. The council will still ask for him and will likely

sentence him. It wasn't enough. We did not only have to know Bryce was lying. We had to prove it.

"So you went to the estate in the evening five days ago to receive the order from Dominic Volkov," I said, summarising his explanation, and Bryce nodded.

I was mad at the bastard but needed to back him into a corner without threatening him.

If I threatened him, his confession might be seen as something made under coercion, which might make it inadmissible.

"Your skin is so sensitive, Tamia; it feels like I am learning your body all over again," Sylvester linked me, eating me up.

I grabbed onto his hair tightly and writhed.

I felt my orgasm coming, and I couldn't control it. Everything was going straight to my head, and my skin was burning.

"Sylvester..." I moaned, and my body climaxed.

"I want to see your green eyes, Tamia," he said and placed himself into me.

He knew I was sensitive, so he was gentle.

"So warm, so soft, so wet," He moaned and started pumping, hitting the right spots. My body felt so different, and I loved it.

I watched his teeth elongate, and his eyes turn black. Knight was in charge, and he increased his speed.

"Mine," He growled his famous words. Owning me with every pump, my body responded strongly. Taking it all and wanting more.

It got into my head, and I could no longer keep eye contact, feeling my orgasm coming.

I grabbed him, digging my nails into his skin, wanting everything he was ready to give and all of him.

"I am coming," I moaned, unable to control my need anymore and shattered all over.

Knight pumped through my orgasm, making me feel like I had an out-of-body experience. If too much pleasure could kill, this would have been my death because he kept pumping, and I kept coming.

Every sense was heightened. Everything amplified. It had never felt this good, and I knew I would be wet every time I thought of this and would find myself running back to him.

He growled and poured into me. My pussy milked him for everything I could get. I felt his hands shake. He could no longer support his weight with it, and he gently lay on top of me to catch his breath.

I wrapped my arms around him and rubbed his back gently. Satisfied and glowing. Sylvester understood my body.

Soon he rolled off me to lie on the bed. Then I turned to the side to look at him. He smiled at me and then touched the tip of my nose gently.

“You know I do not want you in Brighton, but you are too stubborn.” He said, and we both laughed.

“You do not have to solve the mystery, green-eyes. Just come home in three days,” he said, and I smiled and nodded.

“It will feel like an eternity for me here. Not seeing you or being with you for three days would be torture. Please do not let it linger,” He pleaded, and I kissed him to assure him he had nothing to worry about.

He held me all through the night, and soon morning came.

Sylvester made love to me in the shower. We got dressed, and we were famished. So hungry that I felt like biting something. He laughed at my hunger, and we went to the breakfast room.

We walked past Stephanie’s room, and I felt a chill down my spine.

The woman’s absence and silence troubled me, but Sylvester did not think much of it, so I did not want to bring it up or take any measures, so he won’t think I was against his mother. I could only be lucky where she was concerned so many times. She was his mother, after all, and I know he loved her, regardless of her behaviour.



Everyone was in the lounge, and I noticed only Avery was dressed. Linda wasn't dressed, and she did not seem happy.

I sat down and started dishing my food. At the same time, I greeted them individually with the utmost respect a hungry, freshly fucked woman could manage.

"You are really hungry," Avery said and giggled.

"Alpha must have drained you," she teased, and we both laughed, but Linda did not join in. She was upset.

"What is with her?" I linked Avery, and she stopped laughing.

"Theodore said no. He said he would not allow her to travel to Brighton in her condition." she linked me back, and I felt sorry for her, but I could understand his reasons. She was at a delicate stage. She needed to be careful.

Linda was so angry that her mood affected everyone except my tummy. I ate the tarts, croissants, sandwiches. I sampled everything to eat on the table, and Sylvester was surprised.

"I believe they have good food in Brighton, Green eyes," He said, and everyone laughed, including myself.

I felt terrible for Linda, but Theodore had a point: she was carrying his child, and we did not know what kind of stress we would experience in Brighton.

"You will use the jet," Sylvester said, and I knew if I declined, he would insist. My intention was to arrive there covertly, but it seemed that would not be possible.

"There will be a chauffeur in Gad that will drive you to Brighton. The shadow warriors will be with you, but you won't see them. They are good at hiding and trailing people, which is why they are called shadow warriors. I have instructed them to only interfere when your lives are in danger," he said, and I nodded.

As much as I wanted to tell him it wasn't necessary, I knew those were his conditions.

We got ready to leave, and Sylvester and Marcel decided to drive us to the hangar.

It was a covert mission, so no one was there except the pilot. Avery and I got into the jet.

We landed in Gad an hour later, and I realised the distance would have been torture if we had to drive through. The nausea was terrible, but I kept it together.

True to Sylvester's words, a driver was waiting for us at the airport in Gad, and we proceeded to Brighton.

As we drove through, I realised Gad was a big city. I also saw a lot of electronic billboards paying homage to Sylvester. I honestly thought the west hated the Volkovs.

"These people seem to love Lord Volkov," I said aloud, not wanting to call Sylvester by his name.

"Yes, Luna. Lord Sylvester was the one that brought development to Gad. It wasn't different from Brighton. Where others pushed back, the people of Gad welcomed him, and this was the result. There are other parts of the west like this. After the development of Gad, people accepted him, and he has been working hard ever since. The west is grateful to be under his lordship." Denis, the Chauffeur, said, and I hoped my work would be easy.

The drive was long, and I threw up twice during the journey.

When we got to Brighton, I could see the difference. It was indeed underdeveloped.

We were taken to a small hotel. It had only twenty rooms, and Avery and I decided to share.

I knew we would have to visit the Alpha, but I wanted to rest before I proceeded. I had seen the destruction the attack caused, and it broke my heart.

"How are you feeling?" Avery asked, handing me a glass of water. I sat on the bed in our room. The air conditioning was on, but I was sweating. I knew I needed to tell someone the truth.

I collected the bottle of water from her and drank the content.

She sat next to me and rubbed my back gently.

“After I threw up that day, I haven’t been feeling good,” I confessed.

“Does Sylvester know?” She asked, rubbing my back, and I shook my head.

“If I told him, he wouldn’t let me come, and you know how important it is for us to do this ourselves,” I said, and she nodded.

“Marcel knows if they come here, the people would attack. He felt we should have left the council to handle it,” She said, and I rolled my eyes.

“Not when the perpetrators are nameless and faceless. We are the only people who can protect their reputation and ensure peace,” I told her and further explained what we had learned from the enforcer. She was in shock.

“Poor Dominic. I know he is a douchebag, but he did not deserve that humiliation. I can understand Stephanie’s grudge. Where is she, by the way?” Avery asked, and my stomach churned.

“I believe she is part of the reason I am ill, Ave,” I said, and my friend frowned.

“That woman has it in for me. I know Sylvester loves me and will always side with me, but I do not want to deal with unnecessary stress, and I am afraid of the extent of the damage she might cost. I also would not want her and Sylvester to be estranged.” I confessed feeling emotional about it, and she hugged me.

I let my tears fall freely, realising I had been holding so much in with no outlet. I didn’t want Sylvester to know it bothered me because he had a lot on his plate.

“What about Larry?” She asked, and the thought of Larry made me giggle. I wiped away my tears, laughing.

“Sylvester knows he is innocent but wants to keep him a while longer,” I said, and she laughed.

“I must agree with him on that one. The old man is obnoxious,” She said, and we giggled.

We ordered lunch and then prepared to visit Alpha Jake Brighton. I was nervous about meeting him, but I was hopeful.

Denis took us to the Alpha's house. A blonde-haired woman about twenty years old let us in. The Alpha lived comfortably, and I was glad his home wasn't destroyed.

Avery and I sat on the couch in the living room, and soon Alpha Jake joined us. He wasn't smiling and came to sit down.

"To what do I owe this visit, Luna Albert?" He asked, and I wished he wouldn't call me that.

"Just call me Tamia. I am yet to wed the lord, and I no longer bear Leonardo Albert's mark." I said with a smile, and he nodded.

"So he sent his woman," he said, referring to Sylvester.

"He wanted to come himself, but I insisted I come in his stead," I said, and he looked away and cursed under his breath.

"Alpha Brighton, Lord Volkov had no hand in this," I said, and he stood up. His hands were shaking, and his mouth was quivering.

"His father took my wife and sister, and now he sent his men to kill my people," He said, and I could understand his pain.

"We are trying to get to the bottom of the issue, Alpha. We are trying to fix the problem. Someone is working against Sylvester to force him to lose favour and step down. Please Alpha. If this person succeeds, judging by their methods, the four regions would not have it easy," I said, and he shook his head.

"Alpha Corrigan's region is secured. Nothing can happen to the south. I will just go and live there with my people," he said, and I nodded.

"There is no place like home, Alpha," I said, and he shook his head.

"What do you want, Lady Tamia?" He asked me, and I was about to speak when I felt like throwing up. Avery noticed immediately and asked for their bathroom.

We returned to the living room, and Alpha Jake looked worried.

"You do not seem well. Why will he send you or even let you come?" He said, and I shook my head immediately.

“He didn’t, I insisted,” I managed, and then he sighed.

“I must commend your effort, Luna. Your ex-husband told me the same thing. Let us say that is the case; how can we protect ourselves?” He asked, and I was amazed by his switch but knowing Leo had spoken to him already made me realise he believed Leo but just wanted to hold on to his grudge.

“You can call the Alpha, Beta or Gamma directly to confirm anything henceforth. To show our goodwill, the lord will be footing development projects in Brighton to fix the damage and improve the living standard of the people,” I said, and the man was grinning from ear to ear.

My words must be like music to his ears, and I was glad to put his mind at ease.

“Do you know the name of the enforcer that brought the tax order and led the attack on Brighton?” I asked, and he smiled.

“Councilwoman Pamela sent the tax increment order, but as for the Kappa that attacked, he said he was from Lord Volkov. He told us who sent him before they did their deed,” he explained.

“Did you get his name?” I asked, and he shook his head.

“But I can recognise his face,” He said, and that was good enough for me.

“I will be hosting a small luncheon at the Volkov Estate in a few weeks. I am personally inviting you to come and secretly identify the bastard by looking through the pictures of every kappa warrior that belongs to the north. Do you think it is something you can do?” I asked, and he nodded.

“I would like you to attend a Brighton festival tomorrow night. Some alphas will be in attendance. Kindly have your driver move your belongings to my home. It is wrong to have my future luna, Lady of the north, staying in a hotel. I must say, I see why Lord Volkov chose you,” He said, as much as I wanted to decline and just leave in the morning. I knew it would be rude and spoil the little progress I had made with the man, so I obliged him.

~Tamia~

Avery and I insisted on sharing the same room. Alpha Jake offered to have his pack doctor examine me, but I refused. I planned on managing the condition until I got back to the north.

“That went well; too well, I must say,” Avery linked me, trying to be cautious, and I smiled at her.

“He believed Leo when he told him but still felt insulted until I showed up,” I linked her back, explaining my deduction.

“Alpha Jake Brighton is an old-fashioned man. He expected word to have gone to Sylvester’s ears of the atrocity in Brighton, and he expected Sylvester to apologise personally even though he had no hand in it. It is an ego thing for the old man, nothing more.” I linked Avery, and she laughed.

“What do you think about Councilwoman Pamela? The woman reeks of treachery,” Avery said aloud, and I laughed. It would be unwise for us to remain silent all through the room.

Being former Lunas of top packs, we understood the politics. Alpha Brighton wanted to keep an eye on us and our activities in his territory, so he offered we stay in his house; I was sure people were listening to our conversation.

We had dinner with Alpha Jake, Mikail, his nephew, Iris, his daughter and Donald, his son. His son and nephew were about my age, and I figured Donald would succeed his father soon. His daughter, Iris, kept staring at us during dinner, and I was a bit uncomfortable, but I let it be.

We ate in silence and returned to our room.

“Donald did not seem to like us. I do not know what his deal is. Jake’s nephew, Mikail, was worse. He kept staring at us. Honestly, I can’t wait to be out of this place,” Avery said, lying next to me, and I smiled. The feeling was mutual.

“I am missing Marcel,” She said and sighed.

“He didn’t want me to come, but I insisted. Right now, I just want to head back to the north and never leave his side. It has just been a few hours, and I am missing him so badly,” She said, and I smiled because I felt the same way.

I wondered what Sylvester was doing. As much as I wanted to place a call, it was best I didn't.

I was about to fall asleep when my phone rang. I did not need to guess who it was. I answered in a heartbeat.

"Miss me already, Green eyes?" he said, and I giggled on the phone.

"More than you can imagine. Would have returned in the morning, but Alpha Jake invited us to a festival tomorrow evening, so we will return after the festival," I said, and he grumbled on the phone.

We talked about his day, and I handed the phone to Avery to speak with Marcel. Apparently, she did not come with her phone.

We said good night and fell asleep.

We had breakfast in the morning with our host and his children, and it was a very uncomfortable one.

"When are you two leaving?" Donald asked with a very disrespectful tone, and his father cautioned him.

"You might choose to be silent, but I won't. They are marrying the men that attacked their people and took them away from their husbands. If it isn't shameless and a desperate act of social climbing, then I do not know what is. Yet we welcome them to our home, allow them to eat at our table and pretend everything is okay. Mikail doesn't have a mother because of the Dark Alpha; my mother was taken from me because of the Dark Alpha. Yet we are here. I say these eastern whores should be ashamed of themselves," He said, and I put down my cutlery and wiped my mouth.

His father was going to speak when I stopped him.

"It is easy to point fingers, call people names and judge them when you do not have the full picture. It is easy to speak about loyalty and moral values when you have not experienced certain things, and judging people looking from the outside is easy. You call us whores and wicked. You call my mate vile and evil, but he was our saviour. Where was your moral compass when my ex-husband broke his promises and forced me to live with his fated, and I lost my rights and standing as luna? Where was your moral compass when Avery's husband abused her and her wolf day and night, forced her to live

with his mistress and placed the bitch above her? No one was willing to help, knowing what she was going through. These monsters revived our faith in love and gave us the strength and courage to try again. Sylvester wiped away my tears and gave me hope when I thought all was lost. My husband did not give me up; I gave myself up to get away from him. As for your mother and aunt, I sympathise with you, but Sylvester is nothing like Maurice. If you are too blind to see it, you need to look into the mirror and question your morals," I said, picking up my fork to continue the meal; I could not let it waste. No one said anything.

Alpha Brighton gave us a tour of the village. I saw many things that needed improvement, and I made mental notes to relay to Sylvester when I got home.

"Alpha Leo has offered my people part-time work to help with the income. He is truly a nice man." Jake said, and I smiled at him. I had always known Leo to have a big heart. I was glad the things that happened didn't take it from him.

"How is he?" I asked, eager to know how he was doing but reluctant to show my eagerness.

"He looks like he has seen better days; Alpha Corrigan said he is still hurting over you. I guess he needs closure," He said, and I was hurt to learn that my letter did not give him the closure he needed.

"After what you told my son during breakfast, I figured he did it to himself. I think he is finding it hard to forgive himself. I doubt there is anything you can do to help him. Besides, you seem pretty happy. I believe you love Volkov, or you would have used this opportunity to run away. He is a lucky man," Jake said, and I thanked him.

"I hope Donald and Mikail will heal from what happened to them. Honestly, that is the reason I haven't handed the pack over to Donald yet; he is about twenty-six and ready to take over, but I am afraid he would make a bad decision that would get him and our people into trouble." He confessed, and I smiled at him.

"He will heal, Alpha. We all do," I said, and he nodded.

"I am sorry about the initial reception. Please tell his eminence that I truly feel honoured that he sent you," he said, and I smiled. He sighed and looked at Avery and me.



“You women have been through a lot and are still holding firm. You need all the strength you can manage in that place. The north is a political jungle of people wrestling for power.

Your places as lunas are never secure, so you have to be careful. Too many people want to be affiliated with the north. With all that has happened, the council is only partially loyal to the Lord. He needs to be careful. Maurice knew this, and that was why he was ruthless. Hence why I do not have a grudge against the old Lord. He needed to be a certain way so there would be peace in our world.

I know Sylvester is trying to be kind, but someone has to be stern, keep an eye open, and ears to the ground. He might be suffering a spillover of something from his father’s time. I am not sure, but some of us old Alphas know of the power struggle between the six ruling houses of the north,” He said, and I absorbed every word and then used that opportunity to ask him to elaborate.

“Do you mind telling me about the power struggle?” I asked, and he sighed.

“Let’s start with Stephanie Volkov,” He said, and my stomach churned.

“She is a nice woman, wasn’t treated well by her family and her mate, but she can be vindictive.” He said, and he noticed my countenance.

“Is there an issue?” he asked, and I shook my head

“Nothing, but I would like to know more about her, and you seem to be in the best position to tell me since you experienced when she was in power,” I said, and he laughed.

“There is nothing special about her. She wasn’t so bright. That was why Maurice preferred his fated to her,” he said, and I was in shock.

No one ever mentioned that Maurice had a fated or that Stephanie had to share him with his fated.

“A fated?” I asked the man, and he nodded.

“It was a well-kept secret. Stephanie is a member of the Belyaev family, so no one would dethrone her. His fated’s name was Lady Alissa Pavlishchev. She was from a small merchant family in Gad.

Stephanie would not share her title even though the Lord was and still is allowed to have more than one Lady. So she always ensured the woman was presented as one of his whores.

Maurice and Stephanie fought about it often, but when the Belyaevs threatened to divide the north, Maurice had to let comply. Hence, why Maurice became power-hungry and a monster.

I believe the man wanted to be so strong that no one would be able to threaten him as the Belyaevs did.

Maurice was able to take over completely and subdue them by wiping out the Belyaevs and their supporters, which were the Babanins and the part of the Lawrence family, leaving Stephanie powerless

and defenceless. Unfortunately, Alissa had passed away before he completed his mission, so he decided to keep Stephanie as his Lady and the only Lady of the north," He said, and I was stunned.

"Stephanie made sure no one ever spoke of Alissa or remembered her. I doubt Lord Sylvester and Dominic even know her," he said, and I could not believe how rotten the north was.

I kept all those names in mind and planned to start my investigation from there.

The tour was educative, and I was pleased Jake took the time to show us around and give us some history lessons that we wouldn't have been privy to had we remained in our cocoon at the estate.

I also realised that I needed to be extra careful where Stephanie was concerned. She was the type to always get what she wanted.

Alphas started arriving, and Jake had to excuse us to attend to his guest.

I noticed Iris was excited about it. Hopefully, she would find her mate and not live her life afraid of fate.

Avery and I were sleeping when a bang on the door woke us.

Someone was sent to inform us that the festival was at full blast, and we were needed at the high table to grace the event. We must have overslept.

Avery and I dressed and decided to grace the occasion as special guests from the north. I suspected we would be representing the Lord and beta. The festival was a full blast, and there was a lot of merriment.

We stayed away from alcohol because we had to remain sharp. Alpha Jake sent Iris to bring us to the high table.

We moved through the crowd, and I admired the lights display and merriment.

Seeing how these people turned their misfortune into joy and bounced back was amazing.

They were strong, and I admired them for it. Women, children, and men played and danced. There were bright colours everywhere, confetti and music. It was beautiful.

We headed to the high table, and then I caught his scent.

“Tamia...” Kaira said, nervous, excited and scared. What had just happened to us.

The scent called to me. It was alluring, strong and demanding, woody and musk, masculine in every way. It surrounded me and dominated me.

I was in a trance. My heart was beating really fast. I tried to think of Sylvester, but the thought of him never came. Who was this stranger that fate had tied me to?

I left Avery’s side and stopped following Iris. I followed the scent. The owner was elusive. He knew of me and was leading me somewhere with his scent.

I knew what I was doing was stupid and dangerous, but I could not control myself. I kept telling myself to stop, but my wolf was giddy, and she wanted to know; she wanted to see him.

I walked briskly into a garden, and there he stood with a rose in his hand and fear in his eyes.

Tears formed immediately in my eyes. My heart was pounding, my hands were shaking, and my emotions were all over the place.

I now understood why. Why he did everything he did, and why everyone kept asking if there was anything between us?

Images of him at the party where we met flooded my mind. His attention, his boldness, his possessiveness. I looked at him and began to cry.

“Why didn’t you say anything that night?” I asked him. A tear rolled down his cheek, and he bowed. His hand was shaking too.

## **Chapter 43 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna**

~Sylvester~

What Tamia did blew me away. She fearlessly came to my defence and put the council in their place. I was blessed.

I looked at Dominic’s box and was grateful that he did not come. The hearing would have been difficult if he had shown up. Of everyone, he was the only one that could disrespect me without consequence. It wasn’t that I could not deal with him, but I had to respect my mother and not hurt her by hurting him.

Larry seemed disappointed, and I figured he must have planned something with Dominic. I needed to investigate that man. Even though we all knew Dominic did not have the smarts to pull off something of that magnitude, I could not say the same for Larry.

Tamia was right when she asked them if they traced the documents. As much as they wanted to end the conversation after emphasising attacking Bane and Leo, I had to decline their request to end the meeting.

Pamela clamoured on Leo’s issue deliberately. She said many things about the eastern alpha while watching Tamia’s reaction. I knew what she was trying to prove, but I knew Tamia belonged to me and her heart beat only for me.

“Have you all finished?” I finally spoke, and there was silence. Then Vino stood to speak.

“Yes, we have, your lordship, and we ask to close the meeting,” he said, and I shook my head.

“Today isn’t a silent day for me,” I said, and Vino sat back in his chair.

I looked at Pamela.

“What did you say were alpha Leonardo Albert’s crimes?” I asked her.

“Word has it that he has teamed up with Bane to help build his army, of which they plan on marching up north to overthrow you and take over,” she said with conviction, and I smiled.

“And where did you hear this?” I asked, and she did not look so confident again.

“We must keep our ears to the ground and listen for harmful news that can bring the downfall of our structure.” She explained, and I smiled.

” In other words, it is a rumour,” I said, and she was silent.

“And you ask me to launch an attack against this alpha based on a rumour that has no origin or facts,” I said so she could understand the stupidity of her request.

“I also did not miss that you kept looking at my mate while you made that request,” I said and smiled.

“Let this be the last time this council will try to use Tamia’s ex-husband as bait. It is low and disrespectful. It is stupid and baseless, and I am highly disappointed in all of you.” I said.

“You all called me here for a question and answer session based on baseless allegations. I would have been impressed if you had done your work, but you didn’t.” I said.

“While you are all trying to create an issue out of nothing, there is a serious matter pending that we are yet to discuss,” I said, and they were attentive.

“Who sent Enforcer Bryce Golubev yesterday morning to the east to demand development taxes from Alpha Leonardo? This was done after I told Vino I did not pass that order. Why wasn’t he called back? Why did he threaten the alpha?” I asked, and they were silent.

Tamia was in shock.

I should have told her when she returned to our room yesterday evening, but I was too angry about what the council was doing and worried about how far they were willing to go to say anything to her.

It is a shame that Leo and I can never be friends because I took away his price possession, but I respected the alpha for reaching out instead of reacting.

“I need an answer,” I said, and Councilwoman Joan Clayman stood to speak.

“With all due respect, your Lordship, how did you come about this?” she asked, and I smiled.

“Alpha Leo had the heart to reach out to us and enquire about the so-called development tax. I am glad he did not revolt.” I said and refused to change the topic.

“I asked a question,” I reminded them, and no one spoke, so I looked at Marcel, and he nodded.

Kappa William ushered in the enforcer, and the council members were silent.

“Bryce,” Marcel said, and the man knelt and kept his head bowed. He wasn’t allowed to look into our eyes, and he knew his place.

” Who gave you the order to go to the east yesterday morning? Who paid for your flight and commissioned the mission?” Marcel asked, and he did not speak.

“If you choose to hold your tongue, you and your family will be tried for treason. Delivering false news in the name of the Wolf lord is treasonous,” Marcel warned him, and the man bowed his head.

“I honestly thought the order was genuine. Lord Dominic gave it to me,” he said, and people began to murmur.

“When did he give this to you?” I asked him.

“Three nights ago. It had your seal on. I believed it was from your office,” he said, and people began to murmur.

I could hear outrage and disappointment in the room.

I was wondering if that was why Dominic did not show up. Did he know we would find out the truth? Was he somehow on the run?

“We need to hunt Dominic down and arrest him. He has a lot of explaining to do.” I linked Marcel and Theodore, and they told me they were already on it.

“Dominic should be arrested,” Pamela said, and I noticed Vino was shocked and silent.

“I looked at Larry, who was equally shocked, but I could not believe his reaction. They could have planned it. He could have as well been the mastermind and planned it with my brother to be the fall guy.

I looked at him and let my eyes linger on his.

“I have no hand in this, Lord Volkov,” he said, and I smiled.

“That is not for you to decide.” I said, and he widened his eyes.

Kappa William and his men moved to arrest Larry.

” You are guilty until proven innocent. Whatever Dominic does reflects on you.” I said, and most of the council members disagreed with me, but I did not care; I was lord after all, it was time to let them know who was truly in charge.

“With that out of the way, I want to use this opportunity to state that the east is a sovereign region, and we will not tax their alpha. I might be the Wolf lord, but the alpha of the east rules the east, likewise that

of the south. As long as they do not declare war, I will not move to attack them. I do not have lives to waste or homes and families to ruin. War might give my seat and this council money and power, expand our lands and strengthen our reach and hold, but it also ruins lives, destroys homes and brings pain and sorrow to people. My father did much of that in his time, creating enemies for the north and my family’s name. His actions led to his death and birthed grudges from all over. I am not here to continue in his footsteps. My time is for healing, peace and prosperity. None of you should try to force my hand against anyone, secretly or openly, or I will see that action as treason,” I said, and they were silent.

I had said my peace and decided to end the discussion.

Vino ended the discussion, and we left.

Tamia sat in the passenger's seat of the Jeep, a bit silent. It was clear that she was baffled about something. I decided to wait until we got home so we could discuss it.

I also wanted to reward her for her bravery and for coming to my aid.

She was the best.

Every day that passes, I fight with myself and Knight not to go against tradition and claim her. We had two more months to go, but it felt like forever. I wanted to be one with her now.

I touched her lap, and she smiled at me.

"I am glad that went well," she said, and I nodded.

"Thanks to you, darling; you deserve a reward for it," I said and ran my palm up her thigh. She opened her legs to grant me access, and I could smell her arousal. Knight growled in my head, and I swayed.

"Focus," she teased, and I looked at the car in front of us, contemplating if I should park and take her. I decided against it last minute and overtook Theodore and Marcel's Jeep. I needed to get home in a hurry.

I parked at the estate's entrance and made Tamia alight the Jeep so we could rush in.

I did not speak to anyone, and it made her giggle.

I entered our bedroom and crashed my lips against hers.

I was about to get into it when someone began to bang on my door.

"Sylvester, how could you!" I heard my mother's voice, and I knew why.

I grumbled, let Tamia down and zipped up my fly.

She giggled, and I was slightly annoyed that my mother would bang on my door the way she did.

I opened the door, and she walked into my bedroom and slapped me.



There was silence in the room.

I could tolerate her doing that, but I had warned her against hitting me. She tried to send another one, and I held her hand and roared at her. Tamia held me from behind to calm down. Tears were streaming down my mother's face.

"Why did you arrest your brother? I did as Tamia instructed and stopped him from attending the hearing; why lock him up?" she said, and I turned to look at Tamia.

I was surprised that she arranged it without telling me. She knew, and her eyes pleaded with me.

"Did you instruct my mother to keep Dominic?" I asked Tamia, and she nodded.

"I did. I did it for you. You were worried about him and Larry working against you. He was the only one that could challenge you, so I asked her to stop him from attending.." She said, and I knew she meant well. However wrong her actions were, I knew she meant well; it showed in her eyes.

Even though I was mad about the implications of her actions, I could not scold her in the presence of anyone. I turned back to my mother.

"You threatened to deal with my son, Tamia, so I held him back. Why then this? The soldiers dragged him out of his room in silver chains like a criminal," she said in tears, and I did not know what to say. I looked at Tamia, and she could not speak, which meant that conversation had taken place.

"Dominic forged my signature and seal and sent Bryce to threaten Alpha Leonardo," I said, but my mother shook her head. She refused to listen to me. She was too hurt to understand what I had just said. Instead, she wept.

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~Tamia~

Avery and Linda arrived in my room a few minutes after they had linked me.

They sat on the couch while I dressed up in Sylvester's clothes.

What happened with his mother baffled me, and I was nervous about what to expect from the woman.

The switch was disturbing, and somehow I knew it would not be easy onwards.

I did not need to guess whose side Sylvester was on. Stephanie had picked a dangerous game because I was bound to win.

I joined Avery and Linda on the couch, then linked the staff to serve us tea and biscuits.

"What is with Stephanie?" Avery asked me, looking curious.

"She was drinking in the lounge of this wing, and we went to say hello. She was very nasty to us. Calling us whores, backstabbers, thieves, name it, Tamia. She looked like she was out of it," Avery said, and I sighed sadly.

“She is unhappy about what happened with Dominic and believes I was the mastermind behind his arrest. I am officially her enemy now,” I said, and Linda hissed.

“That is pathetic and silly. What do you have to gain from that? You already have it all. You will be the lady of the north in two months. Sylvester is indisputably yours. She is silly,” Linda said, sounding irritated.

“Actually, I did ask her to make sure that Dominic does not show up at the hearing, and I did imply that I will go against him if he troubles Sylvester,” I confessed, and Linda rolled her eyes.

“So what? The asshole deserves it and much more. Sometimes I suspect she didn’t give birth to Sylvester because of the way she is quick to side with Dominic against him, even if Dominic is in the wrong, and that douchebag is always in the wrong. I think it is an odd situation. I can understand favouritism, but this is too damn much. Screw her. We do not need her as our friend.” Linda said, and I giggled

Linda made a lot of sense, but I knew Stephanie was Sylvester’s mother.

“She disagrees with Sylvester’s policies. She wanted him to get justice for her husband. She wanted him to expand..” I said, and Avery began to laugh, interrupting me in the process.

“Really, who will get justice for all the people her husband wronged? Her husband ruined lives and wrecked homes. Bane is a hero. I do not care what people say,” Avery said, and I covered her mouth.

“Please do not say things like that. The walls have ears, and we do not want Stephanie to have anything against us.” I said, and Linda laughed.

Just then, Nancy walked in with our tea and biscuits, and I was worried she might have heard Avery. She was about to leave when I stopped her.

“I am sorry for what I am about to do, Nancy, but I will need you to taste the food. A lot is happening right now, and I am just being careful,” I said, and Nancy smiled.

“It is alright, Luna,” she said, tasted our teas, and ate our biscuits.

She stood for about ten minutes before I apologised and dismissed her.



“What was that about?” Avery asked, biting into her biscuit.

I placed the tea by my nose, and the scent was a bit strong, so I put it down and opted to drink the cranberry variation instead of the black tea.

“Stephanie hates us, and she was married to a psycho. I do not want to make mistakes,” I said, and Linda laughed.

“What is wrong with the tea?” Avery asked me, and I shook my head.

“The smell is a bit too strong this afternoon. I wonder if the brand is what we are used to. I will ask Nancy.” I said, and she nodded and opted to take the cranberry variation, too; likewise, Linda.

“So, who do you think it is?” Avery asked me the real reason they had come.

“I doubt it is Dominic; I think someone set him up to throw us off their scent. He is the most obvious culprit. It is just too easy,” I said, and Linda laughed.

“Sometimes life can be easy, and the truth might really be what it is. Just look at how easily we found love again,” she said, and I nodded.

“I am not disputing the fact that he might have a hand in this. Possibly, he did it, but he was too stupid to cover his tracks. It is a possibility, but between Brighton’s attack and this, it does not seem like the same person.” I said, and Avery nodded.

” I agree, but it still does not mean Dominic is innocent. He might have miscalculated or tried to copy the original crime hoping it would go a certain way,” she said, and it made a lot of sense.

“Dominic was desperate to take over from his brother. The issue with Brighton must have given him the idea to try to replicate the same scenario with an alpha alleged to have teamed up with the enemy of the north. Either way, it would be a winning situation; it would have caused a war or forced Sylvester to step down.” I said, and Linda frowned.

“But if Sylvester steps down, it would leave the Volkov’s line and go to the Sidorovs, then the Orlovs. If neither Marcel nor Theodore cuts it, the north will have to choose between Dominic and Vino to lead

them. Neither of them is an alpha, but they would likely lean towards Dominic.” Linda said, and I nodded.

“You can put it that way, but we also have to consider Dominic’s friendship with Larry. Larry is the eldest on the council. He hates Sylvester and believes Dominic should take over from him. The man must have assured Dominic that he would force the council to endorse him. In exchange, Dominic will be his puppet and wage war, increase the power of the seat and the council and enrich the north,” I said, and they were silent.

“So, how is Sylvester handling it?” Avery asked, and I could not answer that question because I did not know.

“I think we should investigate this thing like we used to do back in the east,” Linda said.

“I do not think Theodore would want you to get involved,” I said, and she rolled her eyes. She wanted to do this for the thrill.

” Let us bring it up during dinner,” I said to them, and Avery agreed.

I decided to tell them what I really wanted.

“I know this might sound crazy.” I began, and everyone was attentive.

“It might even be unnecessary. There might be nothing to it,” I said and sighed.

“But we need to investigate Stephanie,” I said, and Avery frowned.

“Why? The woman is clearly unstable and a psycho, but that would be a waste of time because she would not want to work against her sons. There is no way she would set either of them up. She is also a victim in this,” Avery said, and I nodded at my friend.

“I am not asking that we investigate her because of the event. She has no hand in this and can never actively work against her son. But I need to know what she has in store for Sylvester. She is always quick to side with Dominic against him, and there is that issue of Sylvester not wanting to get the revenge she wanted so badly. I need to protect my man from a woman that is hurting and trying to lash out.” I said and sighed.

"He told her to get out," I confessed, and Linda gasped.

"And he sided with me against her. You needed to see the rage and scorn on her face when she realised he wouldn't back her up. She said many implicating things that she only got away with because Sylvester is her son. There is no way Stephanie is going to let what happened today go. No matter what happens, I need to be a step ahead of her, and I need help," I said, and Linda smiled.

Just then, I felt nauseous and rushed to the bathroom to vomit.

"What is the matter with you?" Linda asked me, and they joined me in the bathroom. Other than the tea and biscuits I ingested, there was nothing in my stomach. So when I threw everything up, I sat by the toilet seat, heaving.

Avery poured cold water overhead, and I sighed with relief because I was burning up.

"What is wrong with you?" Linda asked, looking concerned, and I shook my head

"I guess I am reacting to something in the tea or biscuits. It might also be because of the up-and-down feeling today. Everything has been crazy." I said, feeling better.

"Maybe you should rest," Avery said, and we left the bathroom and went back to the couch.

We talked about other things, watched a movie, and then they left.

Sylvester returned thirty minutes after they left, looking very angry and troubled.

He went to the bathroom immediately, and even though I wanted to join him, I wasn't feeling that great.

He lingered in the bathroom before coming to bed.

"Are we not going for dinner?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

He looked at me and held my hand.

“You look pale,” he said with concern, and I smiled at him and caressed his cheeks gently.

“And you look tensed,” I said, and he smiled at me and pulled me into his arms.

I placed my head against his chest, and he wrapped his arms around me. I felt his uneasiness, and I knew the issue with his brother troubled him.

“You need to be calm, darling. I know you care about Dominic, and I pray he is innocent too, but you need to be calm,” I said, and he kissed the top of my head.

“I want you to join me in questioning him and Larry tomorrow. Do you think you are up for it?” He asked me, and I looked at him with a broad smile.

“That will be amazing. It will be more fun than anything I have been doing since I got here,” I said, and he frowned at me, his dark eyes flashing. I wondered what I said to make Knight jealous.

“More fun than making love?” he asked, and I smiled broadly, shaking my head.

“No, definitely not,” I said, and he smiled and tickled me.

“Did my mother come to this room after I left?” he asked, and I shook my head.

“We are definitely now enemies. I doubt she will come here knowing you aren’t here,” I said, and he nodded.

“She has taken a short trip, and for some reason, I am nervous because it has to do with Dominic,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Avery and Linda said they saw her in the lounge a few hours ago,” I said, and he nodded.

“The alcohol must have given her a bright idea,” he said, and it did not sit well with me.

A desperate woman would do anything. Stephanie’s judgement could not be trusted at the moment.

“Did you have her followed?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

“I doubt I need to have her followed, Tamia. She is just angry. Besides, she is my mother. I can’t treat her like a suspect in a crime,” he said, and I nodded even though I disagreed with him.

I honestly wished he had her followed. Deep down, I doubted her trip had anything to do with Dominic’s freedom.

After hearing what Avery told me she said to them on their way to my room, I knew she believed I had masterminded everything.

She had also implied that my position with Sylvester wasn’t a given and that two months was time enough for things to change. I wondered what my new antagonist had in store for me. I prayed silently for the strength to overcome.

~Tamia~

Morning came, and Sylvester and I got ready for breakfast.

It was going to be a busy day, but I was not feeling up to it.

I was a bit tired even though we didn’t do anything and I had just woken up from sleep.

I did not think much of it and just got ready quietly.

Once we were done getting ready, we went to the dining room to have breakfast.

Everyone was there as always, and we ate in silence.

What happened with Dominic had brought gloom into our lives. I hoped the matter was solved quickly.

I prayed it did not linger because we all deserved better.

Our love was still young; we were still getting to know each other and trying to manoeuvre through our differences to accept them and make it work. This matter needed to be solved as soon as possible.

“Tamia will be accompanying us to question Dominic and Larry,” Sylvester announced, and Marcel nodded.

“I want Avery to come with us too,” Marcel said, and Sylvester didn’t seem okay with it, but he did not complain.

Theodore requested to bring Linda along, and I touched Sylvester’s lap to stop him from making a scene.

I could not really eat, so I just pushed my food about the plate picking the bits and stalling for breakfast to be over.

We finished, and Sylvester decided to go to the cells on the property to question Dominic.

As we moved towards the place, I remembered when Dominic attacked my friends and me and locked us up because of councilwoman Jenny’s death and the attack on his mother.

I was still baffled why the attackers spared Stephanie’s life. It really didn’t add up.

When we got there, we noticed Dominic outside his cell in chains standing with some officers.

“What is going on here?” Sylvester growled. He was angry.

“What is the council task force doing here?” he asked, and the men saluted him and bowed their heads immediately.

“Your eminence, the council has ordered that we move him to the council prison,” One of them said.

“Under whose orders and why?” Sylvester asked.

“It was a collective decision by all council members. The act of treason is judged and punished by the council,” The man said and handed Sylvester a paper.

Sylvester did not bother to read the piece of paper. He just tore it.

“Out of my house now!” he ordered them, and they shook; even I shook because there was an authority in his voice.

We let them leave, and Sylvester’s Kappas ushered Dominic to a room.

We followed, and as soon as Dominic sat down, he looked at Sylvester.

“What would you gain in this? You already have it all. Why lock me up? First, your woman threatened mother to keep me at home, and now I am being tried for treason. What happened to you, Sylvester? We used to fight, but nothing like this,” He said with disbelief, and I could see he was genuinely hurt.

“It stopped being fair when you decided to forge my signature and seal and send Bryce to stir up shit in the east. You knew the development tax issue was false, yet you still chose to use that same method to cause trouble for me. Why?” Sylvester asked him, and he looked at me.

“Do not look at Tamia; focus on me, Dominic. I need to know why you would actively work against me,” he said, and Dominic’s eyes welled up with tears.

“If I tell you my truth, would you believe me?” Dominic asked, and Sylvester did not respond.

“Answer me!” Sylvester growled at his brother. The pressure was overwhelming, making me nauseous, but I held it. Beads of sweat formed on my forehead, and my vision was a bit blurry, but I tried to keep it together.

“I did not give anything to Bryce. He is lying against me, Sylvester. Mother asked me before she left to get help, and I told her the same thing. I did not do this. I have never given Bryce anything or sent him on an errand before. I was stunned when I was arrested, and his name came up as my accomplice.” Dominic said to his brother.

“Why would Bryce lie against you?” Sylvester asked, and Dominic looked at me.

“She wants to be rid of me. Can’t you see what she is doing? Mother told me how you treated her and insulted her because of this woman. Did it ever occur to you that she and her so-called ex might be trying to divide the strength of the north? Bryce might have collected money or something from Leo and Bane to do this. They need a reason to go to war. They might have done this to try to create the opportunity to attack. Do you not think it is weird she would just fall in love with you and want to spend the rest of her life with you? All three of you are blind. You destroyed their homes and took them away

from their mates. No matter how fucked up their marriage situation was, you

can't dispute that they loved their mates. Do not let them turn you against your people, Sylvester. I might be a douchebag, and you and I might not see eye to eye on many things, but I did not do this. I did not send Bryce anywhere. I do not know why he will speak my name," Dominic said and bowed.

"Your explanation isn't good enough for me, Dominic. I will give you time to think about things, and then I will return. If you do not tell me the truth, I will hand you over to the council and wash my hands off the case," Sylvester told him calmly.

"Mother was right when she said she needed to go get help because she doubted you would help me, since your woman controls you now," Dominic said, looking at me scornfully.

"Matter of fact, she is right. I am a fool for my mate, and it will always be that way. You are lucky she isn't evil or vindictive. You wouldn't have been here if that was the case," Sylvester told Dominic, and tears streamed down Dominic's face.

"I didn't do this, little brother. I swear on my wolf and everything I hold dear that I did not do this. Someone or some people are trying to set me up. Please do not let them win," he pleaded with Sylvester in tears, and somehow I suspected the man was telling the truth.

It broke my heart to see them like this.

I decided I would come and speak to him alone.

"Let us go," Sylvester said and turned his back.

"Please, Sylvester, I am begging you," Dominic said in tears.

"The punishment of treason is death. I didn't do this," he pleaded, and I placed a hand over Sylvester's shoulder.

"You can't leave him here unprotected. He could be telling the truth. If he is, the culprits might try to finish the job," I linked him, and Sylvester looked at me. His eyes lingered on me, and he looked at Dominic and then at Marcel.

"Lock him in a protection cell," He ordered Marcel and led me out.



I noticed we were heading for the exit, and Marcel and Theodore were not behind us.

“where are we going?” I asked Sylvester.

“To see Larry,” he said, and I shook my head.

“I doubt it will yield anything,” I said, and he frowned.

“We are at a dead end. I need to know who is who in this, Tamia. My reputation and the peace of our world are at stake here,” He said, and I pulled him close to me. I could feel his panic.

~Devin~

I was sitting in my office when my beta, Lukman, walked into my office to announce Alpha Jake Brighton’s arrival. I thought my business with his pack was over. What was he doing in my pack? I did not want to seem rude, but I wasn’t in the mood for a guest.

“Let him in,” I told my beta.

Alpha Brighton walked into my office smiling, and I wondered what the occasion was.

“Good afternoon, Bane,” he said, and I plastered a fake smile on my face to avoid being rude.

“Hello, Brighton,” I told him, and he nodded and sat down without me offering him a seat. The man made himself comfortable.

“To what do I owe this visit?” I asked him, wanting to get straight to the point, and he sighed.

“I was laying on my bed last night thinking of how to improve my people’s lives when an idea popped into my head,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Shouldn’t you be discussing that with Volkov?” I asked, and he had an angry scowl on his face.

“I can never discuss my people with that bastard. He has done enough,” he said, and I wasn’t comfortable with his words. As much as I wanted to dissolve the rule of the north, I wasn’t comfortable having such a conversation.

Jake noticed and frowned at me.

“Did I come on a bad day?” he asked, and I wanted to say yes, but I shook my head and smiled at him.

I couldn't be happy or enthusiastic about anything. There were just two months left to the blue moon. If I don't do anything and Sylvester claims Tamia, I would have to kill him to get her back. I hope she isn't in love with him. I needed to do something quickly.

“Care to elaborate?” I finally said, wanting to be rid of the man.

He smiled, adjusted his seat, and then looked at my shelf where I had drinks.

I deliberately didn't offer him anything because I did not want to stand up.

“If you want some, you can pour yourself a glass,” I said, and he smiled and went to pour himself a glass of brandy. He took a sip and returned to sit down.

“I know what you did for my people was from the kindness of your heart, and I appreciate it,” he started, and I was attentive.

“I was hoping you could allow my people to work in your region. Mostly part-time odd jobs in construction and the factories,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“The income and experience will help develop my people, and if things get worse with the north, we can abandon our lands and settle down in your region as members of your pack. I am willing to let go of my leadership for the sake of my people,” he said, and I knew he was serious.

I had to respect the love he had for his people.

“I do not think that will be possible in the south because we are highly populated,” I said, and his smile dropped.

“But,” I added, and there was hope in his eyes.

“I plan on visiting Leonardo Albert in the east. They have land and jobs. Your people will be able to settle and work there. He might even give you land to use to lead your people.” I said, and he frowned at me.

“Are you his friend?” he asked, feeling awkward about my suggestion.

“We are acquainted, and I know they need people for manual labour due to the current issues they had with the north and the fact that some of their people have moved to the south,” I told him, and he smiled at me.

“When do you plan to visit him?” he asked, and I sighed.

“I have an appointment for tomorrow. Mind you, I have an issue to discuss with him already, so you will have to table your matter yourself,” I told him, and he nodded.

“What time do you leave for the east tomorrow?” he asked

“Ten in the morning. Mountain Pack isn’t far from Greenwood. I will be there in two hours.” I told him, and he nodded and stood up.

“I will return by eight tomorrow so we can leave for the place together.” He said, and I nodded.

Morning came, and Jake Brighton arrived earlier than eight. I knew he was desperate. I could see his desperation, and I hoped Leo would ease his mind and put a smile on his face.

The people of Brighton needed a break. It was sad I couldn’t give them that.

We arrived at Mountain on time. I expected Leo was waiting for me in his office. I had to commend the man for being civil.

We were offered drinks, and I opted to drink water instead. Beta Casper took us to Leo’s office, but I asked Jake to wait so I could speak to Leo privately.

I entered Leo’s office, and he was looking bedraggled. His beard had overgrown, and he had dark circles. I could tell he was not sleeping, but it wasn’t my business.

“To what do I owe this visit, Alpha Devin?” He said. I did not know if he was in the right mood to discuss my concerns. I knew Tamia was the reason for his appearance. I did not understand why he did not treat her well when they were together. He must have thought she would always be with him hence why he accepted Amanda. It was his loss.

“Alpha Leo,” I said.

"I do not know where to begin, but I need your help," I added, and he was attentive.

"I do not know how good your relationship is with Volkov, but I need you to help me inform Tamia that she is my fated," I said, and he exclaimed.

I knew I sounded like a madman, and it wasn't far from the truth, but I needed her to know so she would know that her fated was out there and he was waiting for her. I was hopeful that would buy me time.

"I do not think that will be possible. She is Sylvester's property now. I, too, wish I could take her back, but we both know the Wolf Lord never lets go of his trophies." He said, and I realised he had not heard of the wedding.

"I am desperate. Please help me. My wolf and I have been suffering. You know what it is like. You have a fated. Every day I lay awake wishing I had taken her away from that dinner and dealt with the consequences later. That way, she would have been mine, and Sylvester wouldn't have her because

she wouldn't be in the east to begin with. Please, Leo, I will give anything for you to tell her the truth about me," I pleaded desperately, and he leaned forward.

"Why are you desperate? I told you Sylvester sounded possessive of her. I doubt he will let her go. She is his trophy. The best advice I could give you is to try and visit their annual sports in four months. The trophies are allowed to attend. I plan on attending so I can see her too. She no longer bears my mark. She would recognise you, and then both of you can decide..." he said, but I interrupted him and shook my head.

"I do not have that much time, Leo," I said and bowed.

"Sylvester will marry and claim her on the blue moon night. They have celebrated their engagement," I said, and he exclaimed. I looked at him. His hands were shaking, and tears formed in his eyes immediately. It was clear he had not let go, and I had come to the wrong person for help.

"What?" he said in a low voice. I could hardly make out the sound if it weren't for the fact that I could read lips.

"They are getting married, Leo. I am desperate." I said.

“In that case, I will advise you to let her go,” he said, and I shook my head and banged my hand on the table.

“Don’t ask me to do what you couldn’t do, Leo. I just want you to help me.” I pleaded, my hands shaking.

“Please, I will give anything..” I said, and he shook his head.

“Did it occur to you that she is in love with him and wants to spend the rest of her life with him? Tamia isn’t the type to be forced into a union. I can’t take that bliss from her by telling her about you. I can’t. I know what happened to me with Amanda. My bliss was taken from me the moment I caught Amanda’s scent. It ruined my perfect life. It ruined everything that I held dear, Devin. I can’t allow Tamia to go through that kind of turmoil. It is easy to chase after your fated if you aren’t in love, but it is torture when you have already given your heart to another. No matter how strong the pull was, I could not stop loving Tamia.

I still love her, and I always will. If she is getting married to Sylvester, I will advise you to reject the bond and let her be. Please. She does not need to be torn between her heart’s desire and fate. It wasn’t easy for me; I do not want her to have the same experience,” he pleaded with me. Although the news seemed to break his heart, he was still looking out for her.

“I can’t let her be. I can’t,” I told him my truth, and he sighed.

“Then I wish you the best, but I won’t help you to mess Tamia up,” I told him, and I was mad that he would see my plea as an attempt to mess Tamia up. I did not understand his logic, but I knew he was still hurting. I had come to the wrong person for help. There was no way he would help me get with Tamia. He was selfish like that.

Jake Brighton was ushered into Leo’s office, and he explained his matter to Leo.

“Why haven’t you taken your idea to the north? I am sure the Wolf Lord will have a solution,” Leo said, repeating my words, and Jake got angry.

“I can never go to that bastard for help. He imposed development tax on my people and then sent his enforcers to attack my people when we couldn’t pay,” he said, and Leo shook his head.

“I do not think you should be quick to judge. I do not know what is happening in the north, but I doubt the Wolf lord did that to you. Two days ago, enforcers came here with a written order that we are to pay development taxes henceforth or face the consequences. I panicked, but my beta talked some sense into me. I called the Lord’s office, and his beta was shocked. They never passed such an order. I

believe the issue was from the council. There is a possibility he doesn’t know of the attack on your people.” He said, and Jake shook his head.

” He is marrying your ex-wife. He wouldn’t want her to see him as a monster by taxing and attacking her people.” Brighton said, making a valid point, and Leo sighed.

“Very well. I still doubt the lord had something to do with it, but I am willing to offer your people part- time jobs. I cannot let them settle here because you are under the north, and I do not want trouble with the north,” he said.

Jake was happy about Leo’s response. It was clear he wasn’t expecting to get anything from it, but Leo came through.

I thanked Leo for his time, even though he did not agree to help me. I understood his position but could not give up on my fated.

Jake and I returned to Greenwood, and I teased him about his pack being named after his last name, and he found it funny.

“It was a settlement, and my ancestor was the alpha. It was called Brighton’s pack, and as they grew, the settlement became a village, and it was named after the pack,” he explained, and I laughed. I knew he would soon retire, which was why he was taking all the steps necessary to secure his people and help his son rule with ease. I had to commend him for it. I would have been happier if my father had been as strong as him.

Jake’s wife was taken from him by Lord Maurice Volkov. They were only nineteen when it happened, but he held firm for the sake of their twins and was still holding firm. I respected the man greatly.

“I would like you to visit Brighton, so I can host you, Devin. You have been most kind to us. I want my son and daughter to meet you. I think you can come and unwind in Brighton. We might not be developed, but our environment is serene and good for the soul,” he said, and it sounded like a

good idea because I needed to think, and I couldn't do that with my mind muddled up.

~Tamia~

I could feel Sylvester's uneasiness about my trip to the western village. I did not know how to tell him I could never leave him.

After our discussion, he insisted that we visit Larry.

He wanted to get to the bottom of the matter, and I needed to figure out how to stop him from wasting his time.

I was feeling nauseous, so I went to the bathroom to throw up my stomach's content.

Sylvester rushed to the bathroom, a bit worried. He carried me to the shower and turned on the water while he took off my clothes.

"I noticed you were slightly warm last night but didn't think much of it. Now you are burning up. What is happening?" he asked me calmly, and I could see he was fighting every fibre of his being from acting out.

"It started after we had tea and biscuits yesterday afternoon. I threw it all up and felt better, but the nausea is back," I managed. The water was soothing, and I wanted to stay under it.

"Who served the snacks?" He asked, and I knew what he wanted to imply, so I shook my head.

"I doubt they did anything to the food, darling. I made the person that served it taste it," I said, withholding the person's name, and he was silent. Once I was calm, he carried me to the bed.

"You can't go to Brighton tomorrow in this condition," he said, and I smiled because I was already feeling better.

"Nice try, Alpha," I said and touched his nose. He did not smile.

"Let me call the doctor?" he said, and I knew how important going to Brighton was, so I shook my head and sat up, pretending to be strong.

"I feel better. You will be wasting your time. I believe the stress caused it, and something might have irritated my stomach from breakfast. Come on. Let us visit Larry." I said, and he frowned at me for a bit before finally accepting.

We got dressed and left the room. The moment we walked past Stephanie's room, I became nervous.

"Where do you think your mother went to?" I asked, and Sylvester shook his head.

"I do not know, and honestly, I can't be bothered. No matter who she brings to plead with me to let Dominic go, I won't listen. Sadly, she does not understand the gravity of Dominic's offence," he said, and I touched his hands.

"I do not think your brother did it, Sylvester. I believe him. He is too proud to beg like that. Someone wants him to take the fall. We need to question Bryce, not Larry, and you must ensure the council does not get their hands on Dominic. If they do, he would be found guilty. I doubt they would go through the stress of finding the truth. See how they handled the matter that concerned you. They did not do any investigation to figure out what was going on. They tried to blame you for the crime. They are either a bunch of lazy idiots or against the Volkov family and want you to step down by all means. Which is why you can't let them lay their hands on him." I said, and he pulled me close as we walked.

"If my mother only knew you meant well," he said and stopped to kiss the top of my head. Then he looked into my eyes and caressed my chin.

"Do not get your hopes up, green eyes. Dominic might disappoint you," he said, and I smiled at him.

We left the mansion, and a Jeep was waiting at the entrance.

We drove to Lucland silently, and Stephanie's trip did not sit well with me. I doubted she was going to get help. Whatever she planned on doing was extreme, and I knew it had to do with me.

I could not understand why the woman would blame me for this. I might have overstepped when I went to ask her to keep her son at home, and I might have said some things that scared her, but I have done nothing wrong.

I was troubled, and so was Kaira. Stephanie wasn't a good enemy to have.



Even though Sylvester had sided with me against her, and I knew she couldn't make him change his mind about me, I did not want their relationship to be damaged.

I remembered all the good times we had had with Stephanie and wondered if she had been pretending all along. I doubted it, though, because she seemed genuine. She loses her mind whenever it has to do with Dominic, and I needed to know why.

We arrived at the Northern prisons, and to my surprise, Sylvester asked to see Bryce instead of Larry.

"You changed your mind?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

"I want us to see Bryce first, and then we can check on Larry," he said, smiling, and I smiled back.

I could see he was stressed and worried, but he hid it well.

It wasn't easy knowing that faceless and nameless people were plotting against him.

I just hope he handles the pressure well.

We were led to an interrogation room.

The smell of the disinfectant they used to clean the place filled my nose, and I felt sick but held it. I knew if I showed any sign of sickness, Sylvester won't allow me to go to Brighton.

"May I have a glass of cold water?" I linked Sylvester, and he frowned at me. I smiled at him, so he won't think anything was wrong.

"Thirsty", I whispered, and he nodded.

Four chairs were in the room, and one was welded to a desk. I figured that was for the prisoner. I sat on one of the free chairs while Sylvester paced.

The water came, and it was freezing. Drinking it made me feel better. Bryce was ushered in a few minutes later and kept his eyes bowed.

"Look up," I ordered him to look into his eyes.

He refused until Sylvester ordered him to.

“You do whatever she tells you,” he warned the man, and he apologised to me.

“Explain how Dominic sent you the order.” Sylvester said, and Bryce looked down.

“Look up!” I ordered the man I went to stand beside Sylvester.

I doubted the man would tell the truth, but I needed to see his eyes.

“He called me to come to the estate. Then he handed the document to me and told me that his eminence wanted me to carry out the task quickly. That the east is supposed to pay development tax, and if they refuse, I should use force.” he said, and Sylvester looked at him.

“Was he the one that asked you to request development tax from Brighton too?” Sylvester asked, but I doubted that was the right question because the council-owned up to it.

“That order came from the council”, he said, and I now understood what Sylvester was doing. He wanted to gauge his reaction. He wanted to understand how he behaved when he told the truth and compare it to his mannerisms when he spoke of his dealings with Dominic. Sylvester was a master.

“Tell me how Dominic called you. When he called, and the time and day you went to the estate?” Sylvester asked, and the man swallowed.

“He called me in the evening, and I went there an hour after his call. This happened five days ago,” he said, and Sylvester was satisfied, but I wasn’t.

“You were right, Tamia; he is lying,” Sylvester linked me.

This wasn’t Sylvester’s duty. His office places him higher than this. They would normally send Kappa William or kappa Wilson to do this. Sylvester must care for his brother to do it himself.

Although Sylvester had figured out the man was lying, Sylvester’s conviction was not enough to free Dominic. The council will still ask for him and will likely

sentence him. It wasn't enough. We did not only have to know Bryce was lying. We had to prove it.

"So you went to the estate in the evening five days ago to receive the order from Dominic Volkov," I said, summarising his explanation, and Bryce nodded.

I was mad at the bastard but needed to back him into a corner without threatening him.

If I threatened him, his confession might be seen as something made under coercion, which might make it inadmissible.

"Your skin is so sensitive, Tamia; it feels like I am learning your body all over again," Sylvester linked me, eating me up.

I grabbed onto his hair tightly and writhed.

I felt my orgasm coming, and I couldn't control it. Everything was going straight to my head, and my skin was burning.

"Sylvester..." I moaned, and my body climaxed.

"I want to see your green eyes, Tamia," he said and placed himself into me.

He knew I was sensitive, so he was gentle.

"So warm, so soft, so wet," He moaned and started pumping, hitting the right spots. My body felt so different, and I loved it.

I watched his teeth elongate, and his eyes turn black. Knight was in charge, and he increased his speed.

"Mine," He growled his famous words. Owning me with every pump, my body responded strongly. Taking it all and wanting more.

It got into my head, and I could no longer keep eye contact, feeling my orgasm coming.

I grabbed him, digging my nails into his skin, wanting everything he was ready to give and all of him.

"I am coming," I moaned, unable to control my need anymore and shattered all over.

Knight pumped through my orgasm, making me feel like I had an out-of-body experience. If too much pleasure could kill, this would have been my death because he kept pumping, and I kept coming.

Every sense was heightened. Everything amplified. It had never felt this good, and I knew I would be wet every time I thought of this and would find myself running back to him.

He growled and poured into me. My pussy milked him for everything I could get. I felt his hands shake. He could no longer support his weight with it, and he gently lay on top of me to catch his breath.

I wrapped my arms around him and rubbed his back gently. Satisfied and glowing. Sylvester understood my body.

Soon he rolled off me to lie on the bed. Then I turned to the side to look at him. He smiled at me and then touched the tip of my nose gently.

“You know I do not want you in Brighton, but you are too stubborn.” He said, and we both laughed.

“You do not have to solve the mystery, green-eyes. Just come home in three days,” he said, and I smiled and nodded.

“It will feel like an eternity for me here. Not seeing you or being with you for three days would be torture. Please do not let it linger,” He pleaded, and I kissed him to assure him he had nothing to worry about.

He held me all through the night, and soon morning came.

Sylvester made love to me in the shower. We got dressed, and we were famished. So hungry that I felt like biting something. He laughed at my hunger, and we went to the breakfast room.

We walked past Stephanie’s room, and I felt a chill down my spine.

The woman’s absence and silence troubled me, but Sylvester did not think much of it, so I did not want to bring it up or take any measures, so he won’t think I was against his mother. I could only be lucky where she was concerned so many times. She was his mother, after all, and I know he loved her, regardless of her behaviour.

Everyone was in the lounge, and I noticed only Avery was dressed. Linda wasn't dressed, and she did not seem happy.

I sat down and started dishing my food. At the same time, I greeted them individually with the utmost respect a hungry, freshly fucked woman could manage.

"You are really hungry," Avery said and giggled.

"Alpha must have drained you," she teased, and we both laughed, but Linda did not join in. She was upset.

"What is with her?" I linked Avery, and she stopped laughing.

"Theodore said no. He said he would not allow her to travel to Brighton in her condition." she linked me back, and I felt sorry for her, but I could understand his reasons. She was at a delicate stage. She needed to be careful.

Linda was so angry that her mood affected everyone except my tummy. I ate the tarts, croissants, sandwiches. I sampled everything to eat on the table, and Sylvester was surprised.

"I believe they have good food in Brighton, Green eyes," He said, and everyone laughed, including myself.

I felt terrible for Linda, but Theodore had a point: she was carrying his child, and we did not know what kind of stress we would experience in Brighton.

"You will use the jet," Sylvester said, and I knew if I declined, he would insist. My intention was to arrive there covertly, but it seemed that would not be possible.

"There will be a chauffeur in Gad that will drive you to Brighton. The shadow warriors will be with you, but you won't see them. They are good at hiding and trailing people, which is why they are called shadow warriors. I have instructed them to only interfere when your lives are in danger," he said, and I nodded.

As much as I wanted to tell him it wasn't necessary, I knew those were his conditions.

We got ready to leave, and Sylvester and Marcel decided to drive us to the hangar.

It was a covert mission, so no one was there except the pilot. Avery and I got into the jet.

We landed in Gad an hour later, and I realised the distance would have been torture if we had to drive through. The nausea was terrible, but I kept it together.

True to Sylvester's words, a driver was waiting for us at the airport in Gad, and we proceeded to Brighton.

As we drove through, I realised Gad was a big city. I also saw a lot of electronic billboards paying homage to Sylvester. I honestly thought the west hated the Volkovs.

"These people seem to love Lord Volkov," I said aloud, not wanting to call Sylvester by his name.

"Yes, Luna. Lord Sylvester was the one that brought development to Gad. It wasn't different from Brighton. Where others pushed back, the people of Gad welcomed him, and this was the result. There are other parts of the west like this. After the development of Gad, people accepted him, and he has been working hard ever since. The west is grateful to be under his lordship." Denis, the Chauffeur, said, and I hoped my work would be easy.

The drive was long, and I threw up twice during the journey.

When we got to Brighton, I could see the difference. It was indeed underdeveloped.

We were taken to a small hotel. It had only twenty rooms, and Avery and I decided to share.

I knew we would have to visit the Alpha, but I wanted to rest before I proceeded. I had seen the destruction the attack caused, and it broke my heart.

"How are you feeling?" Avery asked, handing me a glass of water. I sat on the bed in our room. The air conditioning was on, but I was sweating. I knew I needed to tell someone the truth.

I collected the bottle of water from her and drank the content.

She sat next to me and rubbed my back gently.

“After I threw up that day, I haven’t been feeling good,” I confessed.

“Does Sylvester know?” She asked, rubbing my back, and I shook my head.

“If I told him, he wouldn’t let me come, and you know how important it is for us to do this ourselves,” I said, and she nodded.

“Marcel knows if they come here, the people would attack. He felt we should have left the council to handle it,” She said, and I rolled my eyes.

“Not when the perpetrators are nameless and faceless. We are the only people who can protect their reputation and ensure peace,” I told her and further explained what we had learned from the enforcer. She was in shock.

“Poor Dominic. I know he is a douchebag, but he did not deserve that humiliation. I can understand Stephanie’s grudge. Where is she, by the way?” Avery asked, and my stomach churned.

“I believe she is part of the reason I am ill, Ave,” I said, and my friend frowned.

“That woman has it in for me. I know Sylvester loves me and will always side with me, but I do not want to deal with unnecessary stress, and I am afraid of the extent of the damage she might cost. I also would not want her and Sylvester to be estranged.” I confessed feeling emotional about it, and she hugged me.

I let my tears fall freely, realising I had been holding so much in with no outlet. I didn’t want Sylvester to know it bothered me because he had a lot on his plate.

“What about Larry?” She asked, and the thought of Larry made me giggle. I wiped away my tears, laughing.

“Sylvester knows he is innocent but wants to keep him a while longer,” I said, and she laughed.

“I must agree with him on that one. The old man is obnoxious,” She said, and we giggled.

We ordered lunch and then prepared to visit Alpha Jake Brighton. I was nervous about meeting him, but I was hopeful.

Denis took us to the Alpha's house. A blonde-haired woman about twenty years old let us in. The Alpha lived comfortably, and I was glad his home wasn't destroyed.

Avery and I sat on the couch in the living room, and soon Alpha Jake joined us. He wasn't smiling and came to sit down.

"To what do I owe this visit, Luna Albert?" He asked, and I wished he wouldn't call me that.

"Just call me Tamia. I am yet to wed the lord, and I no longer bear Leonardo Albert's mark." I said with a smile, and he nodded.

"So he sent his woman," he said, referring to Sylvester.

"He wanted to come himself, but I insisted I come in his stead," I said, and he looked away and cursed under his breath.

"Alpha Brighton, Lord Volkov had no hand in this," I said, and he stood up. His hands were shaking, and his mouth was quivering.

"His father took my wife and sister, and now he sent his men to kill my people," He said, and I could understand his pain.

"We are trying to get to the bottom of the issue, Alpha. We are trying to fix the problem. Someone is working against Sylvester to force him to lose favour and step down. Please Alpha. If this person succeeds, judging by their methods, the four regions would not have it easy," I said, and he shook his head.

"Alpha Corrigan's region is secured. Nothing can happen to the south. I will just go and live there with my people," he said, and I nodded.

"There is no place like home, Alpha," I said, and he shook his head.

"What do you want, Lady Tamia?" He asked me, and I was about to speak when I felt like throwing up. Avery noticed immediately and asked for their bathroom.

We returned to the living room, and Alpha Jake looked worried.

"You do not seem well. Why will he send you or even let you come?" He said, and I shook my head immediately.



“He didn’t, I insisted,” I managed, and then he sighed.

“I must commend your effort, Luna. Your ex-husband told me the same thing. Let us say that is the case; how can we protect ourselves?” He asked, and I was amazed by his switch but knowing Leo had spoken to him already made me realise he believed Leo but just wanted to hold on to his grudge.

“You can call the Alpha, Beta or Gamma directly to confirm anything henceforth. To show our goodwill, the lord will be footing development projects in Brighton to fix the damage and improve the living standard of the people,” I said, and the man was grinning from ear to ear.

My words must be like music to his ears, and I was glad to put his mind at ease.

“Do you know the name of the enforcer that brought the tax order and led the attack on Brighton?” I asked, and he smiled.

“Councilwoman Pamela sent the tax increment order, but as for the Kappa that attacked, he said he was from Lord Volkov. He told us who sent him before they did their deed,” he explained.

“Did you get his name?” I asked, and he shook his head.

“But I can recognise his face,” He said, and that was good enough for me.

“I will be hosting a small luncheon at the Volkov Estate in a few weeks. I am personally inviting you to come and secretly identify the bastard by looking through the pictures of every kappa warrior that belongs to the north. Do you think it is something you can do?” I asked, and he nodded.

“I would like you to attend a Brighton festival tomorrow night. Some alphas will be in attendance. Kindly have your driver move your belongings to my home. It is wrong to have my future luna, Lady of the north, staying in a hotel. I must say, I see why Lord Volkov chose you,” He said, as much as I wanted to decline and just leave in the morning. I knew it would be rude and spoil the little progress I had made with the man, so I obliged him.

~Tamia~

Avery and I insisted on sharing the same room. Alpha Jake offered to have his pack doctor examine me, but I refused. I planned on managing the condition until I got back to the north.

“That went well; too well, I must say,” Avery linked me, trying to be cautious, and I smiled at her.

“He believed Leo when he told him but still felt insulted until I showed up,” I linked her back, explaining my deduction.

“Alpha Jake Brighton is an old-fashioned man. He expected word to have gone to Sylvester’s ears of the atrocity in Brighton, and he expected Sylvester to apologise personally even though he had no hand in it. It is an ego thing for the old man, nothing more.” I linked Avery, and she laughed.

“What do you think about Councilwoman Pamela? The woman reeks of treachery,” Avery said aloud, and I laughed. It would be unwise for us to remain silent all through the room.

Being former Lunas of top packs, we understood the politics. Alpha Brighton wanted to keep an eye on us and our activities in his territory, so he offered we stay in his house; I was sure people were listening to our conversation.

We had dinner with Alpha Jake, Mikail, his nephew, Iris, his daughter and Donald, his son. His son and nephew were about my age, and I figured Donald would succeed his father soon. His daughter, Iris, kept staring at us during dinner, and I was a bit uncomfortable, but I let it be.

We ate in silence and returned to our room.

“Donald did not seem to like us. I do not know what his deal is. Jake’s nephew, Mikail, was worse. He kept staring at us. Honestly, I can’t wait to be out of this place,” Avery said, lying next to me, and I smiled. The feeling was mutual.

“I am missing Marcel,” She said and sighed.

“He didn’t want me to come, but I insisted. Right now, I just want to head back to the north and never leave his side. It has just been a few hours, and I am missing him so badly,” She said, and I smiled because I felt the same way.

I wondered what Sylvester was doing. As much as I wanted to place a call, it was best I didn't.

I was about to fall asleep when my phone rang. I did not need to guess who it was. I answered in a heartbeat.

"Miss me already, Green eyes?" he said, and I giggled on the phone.

"More than you can imagine. Would have returned in the morning, but Alpha Jake invited us to a festival tomorrow evening, so we will return after the festival," I said, and he grumbled on the phone.

We talked about his day, and I handed the phone to Avery to speak with Marcel. Apparently, she did not come with her phone.

We said good night and fell asleep.

We had breakfast in the morning with our host and his children, and it was a very uncomfortable one.

"When are you two leaving?" Donald asked with a very disrespectful tone, and his father cautioned him.

"You might choose to be silent, but I won't. They are marrying the men that attacked their people and took them away from their husbands. If it isn't shameless and a desperate act of social climbing, then I do not know what is. Yet we welcome them to our home, allow them to eat at our table and pretend everything is okay. Mikail doesn't have a mother because of the Dark Alpha; my mother was taken from me because of the Dark Alpha. Yet we are here. I say these eastern whores should be ashamed of themselves," He said, and I put down my cutlery and wiped my mouth.

His father was going to speak when I stopped him.

"It is easy to point fingers, call people names and judge them when you do not have the full picture. It is easy to speak about loyalty and moral values when you have not experienced certain things, and judging people looking from the outside is easy. You call us whores and wicked. You call my mate vile and evil, but he was our saviour. Where was your moral compass when my ex-husband broke his promises and forced me to live with his fated, and I lost my rights and standing as luna? Where was your moral compass when Avery's husband abused her and her wolf day and night, forced her to live

with his mistress and placed the bitch above her? No one was willing to help, knowing what she was going through. These monsters revived our faith in love and gave us the strength and courage to try again. Sylvester wiped away my tears and gave me hope when I thought all was lost. My husband did not give me up; I gave myself up to get away from him. As for your mother and aunt, I sympathise with you, but Sylvester is nothing like Maurice. If you are too blind to see it, you need to look into the mirror and question your morals," I said, picking up my fork to continue the meal; I could not let it waste. No one said anything.

Alpha Brighton gave us a tour of the village. I saw many things that needed improvement, and I made mental notes to relay to Sylvester when I got home.

"Alpha Leo has offered my people part-time work to help with the income. He is truly a nice man." Jake said, and I smiled at him. I had always known Leo to have a big heart. I was glad the things that happened didn't take it from him.

"How is he?" I asked, eager to know how he was doing but reluctant to show my eagerness.

"He looks like he has seen better days; Alpha Corrigan said he is still hurting over you. I guess he needs closure," He said, and I was hurt to learn that my letter did not give him the closure he needed.

"After what you told my son during breakfast, I figured he did it to himself. I think he is finding it hard to forgive himself. I doubt there is anything you can do to help him. Besides, you seem pretty happy. I believe you love Volkov, or you would have used this opportunity to run away. He is a lucky man," Jake said, and I thanked him.

"I hope Donald and Mikail will heal from what happened to them. Honestly, that is the reason I haven't handed the pack over to Donald yet; he is about twenty-six and ready to take over, but I am afraid he would make a bad decision that would get him and our people into trouble." He confessed, and I smiled at him.

"He will heal, Alpha. We all do," I said, and he nodded.

"I am sorry about the initial reception. Please tell his eminence that I truly feel honoured that he sent you," he said, and I smiled. He sighed and looked at Avery and me.

“You women have been through a lot and are still holding firm. You need all the strength you can manage in that place. The north is a political jungle of people wrestling for power.

Your places as lunas are never secure, so you have to be careful. Too many people want to be affiliated with the north. With all that has happened, the council is only partially loyal to the Lord. He needs to be careful. Maurice knew this, and that was why he was ruthless. Hence why I do not have a grudge against the old Lord. He needed to be a certain way so there would be peace in our world.

I know Sylvester is trying to be kind, but someone has to be stern, keep an eye open, and ears to the ground. He might be suffering a spillover of something from his father’s time. I am not sure, but some of us old Alphas know of the power struggle between the six ruling houses of the north,” He said, and I absorbed every word and then used that opportunity to ask him to elaborate.

“Do you mind telling me about the power struggle?” I asked, and he sighed.

“Let’s start with Stephanie Volkov,” He said, and my stomach churned.

“She is a nice woman, wasn’t treated well by her family and her mate, but she can be vindictive.” He said, and he noticed my countenance.

“Is there an issue?” he asked, and I shook my head

“Nothing, but I would like to know more about her, and you seem to be in the best position to tell me since you experienced when she was in power,” I said, and he laughed.

“There is nothing special about her. She wasn’t so bright. That was why Maurice preferred his fated to her,” he said, and I was in shock.

No one ever mentioned that Maurice had a fated or that Stephanie had to share him with his fated.

“A fated?” I asked the man, and he nodded.

“It was a well-kept secret. Stephanie is a member of the Belyaev family, so no one would dethrone her. His fated’s name was Lady Alissa Pavlishchev. She was from a small merchant family in Gad.

Stephanie would not share her title even though the Lord was and still is allowed to have more than one Lady. So she always ensured the woman was presented as one of his whores.

Maurice and Stephanie fought about it often, but when the Belyaevs threatened to divide the north, Maurice had to let comply. Hence, why Maurice became power-hungry and a monster.

I believe the man wanted to be so strong that no one would be able to threaten him as the Belyaevs did.

Maurice was able to take over completely and subdue them by wiping out the Belyaevs and their supporters, which were the Babanins and the part of the Lawrence family, leaving Stephanie powerless

and defenceless. Unfortunately, Alissa had passed away before he completed his mission, so he decided to keep Stephanie as his Lady and the only Lady of the north," He said, and I was stunned.

"Stephanie made sure no one ever spoke of Alissa or remembered her. I doubt Lord Sylvester and Dominic even know her," he said, and I could not believe how rotten the north was.

I kept all those names in mind and planned to start my investigation from there.

The tour was educative, and I was pleased Jake took the time to show us around and give us some history lessons that we wouldn't have been privy to had we remained in our cocoon at the estate.

I also realised that I needed to be extra careful where Stephanie was concerned. She was the type to always get what she wanted.

Alphas started arriving, and Jake had to excuse us to attend to his guest.

I noticed Iris was excited about it. Hopefully, she would find her mate and not live her life afraid of fate.

Avery and I were sleeping when a bang on the door woke us.

Someone was sent to inform us that the festival was at full blast, and we were needed at the high table to grace the event. We must have overslept.

Avery and I dressed and decided to grace the occasion as special guests from the north. I suspected we would be representing the Lord and beta. The festival was a full blast, and there was a lot of merriment.

We stayed away from alcohol because we had to remain sharp. Alpha Jake sent Iris to bring us to the high table.

We moved through the crowd, and I admired the lights display and merriment.

Seeing how these people turned their misfortune into joy and bounced back was amazing.

They were strong, and I admired them for it. Women, children, and men played and danced. There were bright colours everywhere, confetti and music. It was beautiful.

We headed to the high table, and then I caught his scent.

“Tamia...” Kaira said, nervous, excited and scared. What had just happened to us.

The scent called to me. It was alluring, strong and demanding, woody and musk, masculine in every way. It surrounded me and dominated me.

I was in a trance. My heart was beating really fast. I tried to think of Sylvester, but the thought of him never came. Who was this stranger that fate had tied me to?

I left Avery’s side and stopped following Iris. I followed the scent. The owner was elusive. He knew of me and was leading me somewhere with his scent.

I knew what I was doing was stupid and dangerous, but I could not control myself. I kept telling myself to stop, but my wolf was giddy, and she wanted to know; she wanted to see him.

I walked briskly into a garden, and there he stood with a rose in his hand and fear in his eyes.

Tears formed immediately in my eyes. My heart was pounding, my hands were shaking, and my emotions were all over the place.

I now understood why. Why he did everything he did, and why everyone kept asking if there was anything between us?

Images of him at the party where we met flooded my mind. His attention, his boldness, his possessiveness. I looked at him and began to cry.

“Why didn’t you say anything that night?” I asked him. A tear rolled down his cheek, and he bowed. His hand was shaking too.

## **Chapter 44 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna**

~Sylvester~

What Tamia did blew me away. She fearlessly came to my defence and put the council in their place. I was blessed.

I looked at Dominic’s box and was grateful that he did not come. The hearing would have been difficult if he had shown up. Of everyone, he was the only one that could disrespect me without consequence. It wasn’t that I could not deal with him, but I had to respect my mother and not hurt her by hurting him.

Larry seemed disappointed, and I figured he must have planned something with Dominic. I needed to investigate that man. Even though we all knew Dominic did not have the smarts to pull off something of that magnitude, I could not say the same for Larry.

Tamia was right when she asked them if they traced the documents. As much as they wanted to end the conversation after emphasising attacking Bane and Leo, I had to decline their request to end the meeting.

Pamela clamoured on Leo’s issue deliberately. She said many things about the eastern alpha while watching Tamia’s reaction. I knew what she was trying to prove, but I knew Tamia belonged to me and her heart beat only for me.

“Have you all finished?” I finally spoke, and there was silence. Then Vino stood to speak.

“Yes, we have, your lordship, and we ask to close the meeting,” he said, and I shook my head.

“Today isn’t a silent day for me,” I said, and Vino sat back in his chair.

I looked at Pamela.

“What did you say were alpha Leonardo Albert’s crimes?” I asked her.



“Word has it that he has teamed up with Bane to help build his army, of which they plan on marching up north to overthrow you and take over,” she said with conviction, and I smiled.

“And where did you hear this?” I asked, and she did not look so confident again.

“We must keep our ears to the ground and listen for harmful news that can bring the downfall of our structure.” She explained, and I smiled.

” In other words, it is a rumour,” I said, and she was silent.

“And you ask me to launch an attack against this alpha based on a rumour that has no origin or facts,” I said so she could understand the stupidity of her request.

“I also did not miss that you kept looking at my mate while you made that request,” I said and smiled.

“Let this be the last time this council will try to use Tamia’s ex-husband as bait. It is low and disrespectful. It is stupid and baseless, and I am highly disappointed in all of you.” I said.

“You all called me here for a question and answer session based on baseless allegations. I would have been impressed if you had done your work, but you didn’t.” I said.

“While you are all trying to create an issue out of nothing, there is a serious matter pending that we are yet to discuss,” I said, and they were attentive.

“Who sent Enforcer Bryce Golubev yesterday morning to the east to demand development taxes from Alpha Leonardo? This was done after I told Vino I did not pass that order. Why wasn’t he called back? Why did he threaten the alpha?” I asked, and they were silent.

Tamia was in shock.

I should have told her when she returned to our room yesterday evening, but I was too angry about what the council was doing and worried about how far they were willing to go to say anything to her.

It is a shame that Leo and I can never be friends because I took away his price possession, but I respected the alpha for reaching out instead of reacting.

"I need an answer," I said, and Councilwoman Joan Clayman stood to speak.

"With all due respect, your Lordship, how did you come about this?" she asked, and I smiled.

"Alpha Leo had the heart to reach out to us and enquire about the so-called development tax. I am glad he did not revolt." I said and refused to change the topic.

"I asked a question," I reminded them, and no one spoke, so I looked at Marcel, and he nodded.

Kappa William ushered in the enforcer, and the council members were silent.

"Bryce," Marcel said, and the man knelt and kept his head bowed. He wasn't allowed to look into our eyes, and he knew his place.

"Who gave you the order to go to the east yesterday morning? Who paid for your flight and commissioned the mission?" Marcel asked, and he did not speak.

"If you choose to hold your tongue, you and your family will be tried for treason. Delivering false news in the name of the Wolf lord is treasonous," Marcel warned him, and the man bowed his head.

"I honestly thought the order was genuine. Lord Dominic gave it to me," he said, and people began to murmur.

"When did he give this to you?" I asked him.

"Three nights ago. It had your seal on. I believed it was from your office," he said, and people began to murmur.

I could hear outrage and disappointment in the room.

I was wondering if that was why Dominic did not show up. Did he know we would find out the truth? Was he somehow on the run?

“We need to hunt Dominic down and arrest him. He has a lot of explaining to do.” I linked Marcel and Theodore, and they told me they were already on it.

“Dominic should be arrested,” Pamela said, and I noticed Vino was shocked and silent.

“I looked at Larry, who was equally shocked, but I could not believe his reaction. They could have planned it. He could have as well been the mastermind and planned it with my brother to be the fall guy. I

I looked at him and let my eyes linger on his.

“I have no hand in this, Lord Volkov,” he said, and I smiled.

“That is not for you to decide.” I said, and he widened his eyes.

Kappa William and his men moved to arrest Larry.

” You are guilty until proven innocent. Whatever Dominic does reflects on you.” I said, and most of the council members disagreed with me, but I did not care; I was lord after all, it was time to let them know who was truly in charge.

“With that out of the way, I want to use this opportunity to state that the east is a sovereign region, and we will not tax their alpha. I might be the Wolf lord, but the alpha of the east rules the east, likewise that

of the south. As long as they do not declare war, I will not move to attack them. I do not have lives to waste or homes and families to ruin. War might give my seat and this council money and power, expand our lands and strengthen our reach and hold, but it also ruins lives, destroys homes and brings pain and sorrow to people. My father did much of that in his time, creating enemies for the north and my family’s name. His actions led to his death and birthed grudges from all over. I am not here to continue in his footsteps. My time is for healing, peace and prosperity. None of you should try to force my hand against anyone, secretly or openly, or I will see that action as treason,” I said, and they were silent.

I had said my peace and decided to end the discussion.

Vino ended the discussion, and we left.

Tamia sat in the passenger's seat of the Jeep, a bit silent. It was clear that she was baffled about something. I decided to wait until we got home so we could discuss it.

I also wanted to reward her for her bravery and for coming to my aid.

She was the best.

Every day that passes, I fight with myself and Knight not to go against tradition and claim her. We had two more months to go, but it felt like forever. I wanted to be one with her now.

I touched her lap, and she smiled at me.

"I am glad that went well," she said, and I nodded.

"Thanks to you, darling; you deserve a reward for it," I said and ran my palm up her thigh. She opened her legs to grant me access, and I could smell her arousal. Knight growled in my head, and I swayed.

"Focus," she teased, and I looked at the car in front of us, contemplating if I should park and take her. I decided against it last minute and overtook Theodore and Marcel's Jeep. I needed to get home in a hurry.

I parked at the estate's entrance and made Tamia alight the Jeep so we could rush in.

I did not speak to anyone, and it made her giggle.

I entered our bedroom and crashed my lips against hers.

I was about to get into it when someone began to bang on my door.

"Sylvester, how could you!" I heard my mother's voice, and I knew why.

I grumbled, let Tamia down and zipped up my fly.

She giggled, and I was slightly annoyed that my mother would bang on my door the way she did.

I opened the door, and she walked into my bedroom and slapped me.

There was silence in the room.

I could tolerate her doing that, but I had warned her against hitting me. She tried to send another one, and I held her hand and roared at her. Tamia held me from behind to calm down. Tears were streaming down my mother's face.

"Why did you arrest your brother? I did as Tamia instructed and stopped him from attending the hearing; why lock him up?" she said, and I turned to look at Tamia.

I was surprised that she arranged it without telling me. She knew, and her eyes pleaded with me.

"Did you instruct my mother to keep Dominic?" I asked Tamia, and she nodded.

"I did. I did it for you. You were worried about him and Larry working against you. He was the only one that could challenge you, so I asked her to stop him from attending.." She said, and I knew she meant well. However wrong her actions were, I knew she meant well; it showed in her eyes.

Even though I was mad about the implications of her actions, I could not scold her in the presence of anyone. I turned back to my mother.

"You threatened to deal with my son, Tamia, so I held him back. Why then this? The soldiers dragged him out of his room in silver chains like a criminal," she said in tears, and I did not know what to say. I looked at Tamia, and she could not speak, which meant that conversation had taken place.

"Dominic forged my signature and seal and sent Bryce to threaten Alpha Leonardo," I said, but my mother shook her head. She refused to listen to me. She was too hurt to understand what I had just said. Instead, she wept.

~Tamia~

Avery and Linda arrived in my room a few minutes after they had linked me.

They sat on the couch while I dressed up in Sylvester's clothes.

What happened with his mother baffled me, and I was nervous about what to expect from the woman.

The switch was disturbing, and somehow I knew it would not be easy onwards.

I did not need to guess whose side Sylvester was on. Stephanie had picked a dangerous game because I was bound to win.

I joined Avery and Linda on the couch, then linked the staff to serve us tea and biscuits.

“What is with Stephanie?” Avery asked me, looking curious.

“She was drinking in the lounge of this wing, and we went to say hello. She was very nasty to us. Calling us whores, backstabbers, thieves, name it, Tamia. She looked like she was out of it,” Avery said, and I sighed sadly.

“She is unhappy about what happened with Dominic and believes I was the mastermind behind his arrest. I am officially her enemy now,” I said, and Linda hissed.

“That is pathetic and silly. What do you have to gain from that? You already have it all. You will be the lady of the north in two months. Sylvester is indisputably yours. She is silly,” Linda said, sounding irritated.

“Actually, I did ask her to make sure that Dominic does not show up at the hearing, and I did imply that I will go against him if he troubles Sylvester,” I confessed, and Linda rolled her eyes.

“So what? The asshole deserves it and much more. Sometimes I suspect she didn’t give birth to Sylvester because of the way she is quick to side with Dominic against him, even if Dominic is in the wrong, and that douchebag is always in the wrong. I think it is an odd situation. I can understand favouritism, but this is too damn much. Screw her. We do not need her as our friend.” Linda said, and I giggled

Linda made a lot of sense, but I knew Stephanie was Sylvester’s mother.

“She disagrees with Sylvester’s policies. She wanted him to get justice for her husband. She wanted him to expand..” I said, and Avery began to laugh, interrupting me in the process.

“Really, who will get justice for all the people her husband wronged? Her husband ruined lives and wrecked homes. Bane is a hero. I do not care what people say,” Avery said, and I covered her mouth.

“Please do not say things like that. The walls have ears, and we do not want Stephanie to have anything against us.” I said, and Linda laughed.

Just then, Nancy walked in with our tea and biscuits, and I was worried she might have heard Avery. She was about to leave when I stopped her.

“I am sorry for what I am about to do, Nancy, but I will need you to taste the food. A lot is happening right now, and I am just being careful,” I said, and Nancy smiled.

“It is alright, Luna,” she said, tasted our teas, and ate our biscuits.

She stood for about ten minutes before I apologised and dismissed her.

“What was that about?” Avery asked, biting into her biscuit.

I placed the tea by my nose, and the scent was a bit strong, so I put it down and opted to drink the cranberry variation instead of the black tea.

“Stephanie hates us, and she was married to a psycho. I do not want to make mistakes,” I said, and Linda laughed.

“What is wrong with the tea?” Avery asked me, and I shook my head.

“The smell is a bit too strong this afternoon. I wonder if the brand is what we are used to. I will ask Nancy.” I said, and she nodded and opted to take the cranberry variation, too; likewise, Linda.

“So, who do you think it is?” Avery asked me the real reason they had come.

“I doubt it is Dominic; I think someone set him up to throw us off their scent. He is the most obvious culprit. It is just too easy,” I said, and Linda laughed.

“Sometimes life can be easy, and the truth might really be what it is. Just look at how easily we found love again,” she said, and I nodded.

“I am not disputing the fact that he might have a hand in this. Possibly, he did it, but he was too stupid to cover his tracks. It is a possibility, but between

Brighton's attack and this, it does not seem like the same person." I said, and Avery nodded.

"I agree, but it still does not mean Dominic is innocent. He might have miscalculated or tried to copy the original crime hoping it would go a certain way," she said, and it made a lot of sense.

"Dominic was desperate to take over from his brother. The issue with Brighton must have given him the idea to try to replicate the same scenario with an alpha alleged to have teamed up with the enemy of the north. Either way, it would be a winning situation; it would have caused a war or forced Sylvester to step down." I said, and Linda frowned.

"But if Sylvester steps down, it would leave the Volkov's line and go to the Sidorovs, then the Orlovs. If neither Marcel nor Theodore cuts it, the north will have to choose between Dominic and Vino to lead

them. Neither of them is an alpha, but they would likely lean towards Dominic." Linda said, and I nodded.

"You can put it that way, but we also have to consider Dominic's friendship with Larry. Larry is the eldest on the council. He hates Sylvester and believes Dominic should take over from him. The man must have assured Dominic that he would force the council to endorse him. In exchange, Dominic will be his puppet and wage war, increase the power of the seat and the council and enrich the north," I said, and they were silent.

"So, how is Sylvester handling it?" Avery asked, and I could not answer that question because I did not know.

"I think we should investigate this thing like we used to do back in the east," Linda said.

"I do not think Theodore would want you to get involved," I said, and she rolled her eyes. She wanted to do this for the thrill.

"Let us bring it up during dinner," I said to them, and Avery agreed.

I decided to tell them what I really wanted.

"I know this might sound crazy." I began, and everyone was attentive.



"It might even be unnecessary. There might be nothing to it," I said and sighed.

"But we need to investigate Stephanie," I said, and Avery frowned.

"Why? The woman is clearly unstable and a psycho, but that would be a waste of time because she would not want to work against her sons. There is no way she would set either of them up. She is also a victim in this," Avery said, and I nodded at my friend.

"I am not asking that we investigate her because of the event. She has no hand in this and can never actively work against her son. But I need to know what she has in store for Sylvester. She is always quick to side with Dominic against him, and there is that issue of Sylvester not wanting to get the revenge she wanted so badly. I need to protect my man from a woman that is hurting and trying to lash out." I said and sighed.

"He told her to get out," I confessed, and Linda gasped.

"And he sided with me against her. You needed to see the rage and scorn on her face when she realised he wouldn't back her up. She said many implicating things that she only got away with because Sylvester is her son. There is no way Stephanie is going to let what happened today go. No matter what happens, I need to be a step ahead of her, and I need help," I said, and Linda smiled.

Just then, I felt nauseous and rushed to the bathroom to vomit.

"What is the matter with you?" Linda asked me, and they joined me in the bathroom. Other than the tea and biscuits I ingested, there was nothing in my stomach. So when I threw everything up, I sat by the toilet seat, heaving.

Avery poured cold water overhead, and I sighed with relief because I was burning up.

"What is wrong with you?" Linda asked, looking concerned, and I shook my head

"I guess I am reacting to something in the tea or biscuits. It might also be because of the up-and-down feeling today. Everything has been crazy." I said, feeling better.

“Maybe you should rest,” Avery said, and we left the bathroom and went back to the couch.

We talked about other things, watched a movie, and then they left.

Sylvester returned thirty minutes after they left, looking very angry and troubled.

He went to the bathroom immediately, and even though I wanted to join him, I wasn't feeling that great.

He lingered in the bathroom before coming to bed.

“Are we not going for dinner?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

He looked at me and held my hand.

“You look pale,” he said with concern, and I smiled at him and caressed his cheeks gently.

“And you look tensed,” I said, and he smiled at me and pulled me into his arms.

I placed my head against his chest, and he wrapped his arms around me. I felt his uneasiness, and I knew the issue with his brother troubled him.

“You need to be calm, darling. I know you care about Dominic, and I pray he is innocent too, but you need to be calm,” I said, and he kissed the top of my head.

“I want you to join me in questioning him and Larry tomorrow. Do you think you are up for it?” He asked me, and I looked at him with a broad smile.

“That will be amazing. It will be more fun than anything I have been doing since I got here,” I said, and he frowned at me, his dark eyes flashing. I wondered what I said to make Knight jealous.

“More fun than making love?” he asked, and I smiled broadly, shaking my head.

“No, definitely not,” I said, and he smiled and tickled me.

“Did my mother come to this room after I left?” he asked, and I shook my head.

“We are definitely now enemies. I doubt she will come here knowing you aren’t here,” I said, and he nodded.

“She has taken a short trip, and for some reason, I am nervous because it has to do with Dominic,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Avery and Linda said they saw her in the lounge a few hours ago,” I said, and he nodded.

“The alcohol must have given her a bright idea,” he said, and it did not sit well with me.

A desperate woman would do anything. Stephanie’s judgement could not be trusted at the moment.

“Did you have her followed?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

“I doubt I need to have her followed, Tamia. She is just angry. Besides, she is my mother. I can’t treat her like a suspect in a crime,” he said, and I nodded even though I disagreed with him.

I honestly wished he had her followed. Deep down, I doubted her trip had anything to do with Dominic’s freedom.

After hearing what Avery told me she said to them on their way to my room, I knew she believed I had masterminded everything.

She had also implied that my position with Sylvester wasn’t a given and that two months was time enough for things to change. I wondered what my new antagonist had in store for me. I prayed silently for the strength to overcome.

~Tamia~

Morning came, and Sylvester and I got ready for breakfast.

It was going to be a busy day, but I was not feeling up to it.

I was a bit tired even though we didn’t do anything and I had just woken up from sleep.

I did not think much of it and just got ready quietly.

Once we were done getting ready, we went to the dining room to have breakfast.

Everyone was there as always, and we ate in silence.

What happened with Dominic had brought gloom into our lives. I hoped the matter was solved quickly.

I prayed it did not linger because we all deserved better.

Our love was still young; we were still getting to know each other and trying to manoeuvre through our differences to accept them and make it work. This matter needed to be solved as soon as possible.

“Tamia will be accompanying us to question Dominic and Larry,” Sylvester announced, and Marcel nodded.

“I want Avery to come with us too,” Marcel said, and Sylvester didn’t seem okay with it, but he did not complain.

Theodore requested to bring Linda along, and I touched Sylvester’s lap to stop him from making a scene.

I could not really eat, so I just pushed my food about the plate picking the bits and stalling for breakfast to be over.

We finished, and Sylvester decided to go to the cells on the property to question Dominic.

As we moved towards the place, I remembered when Dominic attacked my friends and me and locked us up because of councilwoman Jenny’s death and the attack on his mother.

I was still baffled why the attackers spared Stephanie’s life. It really didn’t add up.

When we got there, we noticed Dominic outside his cell in chains standing with some officers.

“What is going on here?” Sylvester growled. He was angry.

“What is the council task force doing here?” he asked, and the men saluted him and bowed their heads immediately.

“Your eminence, the council has ordered that we move him to the council prison,” One of them said.

“Under whose orders and why?” Sylvester asked.

“It was a collective decision by all council members. The act of treason is judged and punished by the council,” The man said and handed Sylvester a paper.

Sylvester did not bother to read the piece of paper. He just tore it.

“Out of my house now!” he ordered them, and they shook; even I shook because there was an authority in his voice.

We let them leave, and Sylvester’s Kappas ushered Dominic to a room.

We followed, and as soon as Dominic sat down, he looked at Sylvester.

“What would you gain in this? You already have it all. Why lock me up? First, your woman threatened mother to keep me at home, and now I am being tried for treason. What happened to you, Sylvester? We used to fight, but nothing like this,” He said with disbelief, and I could see he was genuinely hurt.

“It stopped being fair when you decided to forge my signature and seal and send Bryce to stir up shit in the east. You knew the development tax issue was false, yet you still chose to use that same method to cause trouble for me. Why?” Sylvester asked him, and he looked at me.

“Do not look at Tamia; focus on me, Dominic. I need to know why you would actively work against me,” he said, and Dominic’s eyes welled up with tears.

“If I tell you my truth, would you believe me?” Dominic asked, and Sylvester did not respond.

“Answer me!” Sylvester growled at his brother. The pressure was overwhelming, making me nauseous, but I held it. Beads of sweat formed on my forehead, and my vision was a bit blurry, but I tried to keep it together.

“I did not give anything to Bryce. He is lying against me, Sylvester. Mother asked me before she left to get help, and I told her the same thing. I did not do

this. I have never given Bryce anything or sent him on an errand before. I was stunned when I was arrested, and his name came up as my accomplice.” Dominic said to his brother.

“Why would Bryce lie against you?” Sylvester asked, and Dominic looked at me.

“She wants to be rid of me. Can’t you see what she is doing? Mother told me how you treated her and insulted her because of this woman. Did it ever occur to you that she and her so-called ex might be trying to divide the strength of the north? Bryce might have collected money or something from Leo and Bane to do this. They need a reason to go to war. They might have done this to try to create the opportunity to attack. Do you not think it is weird she would just fall in love with you and want to spend the rest of her life with you? All three of you are blind. You destroyed their homes and took them away

from their mates. No matter how fucked up their marriage situation was, you can’t dispute that they loved their mates. Do not let them turn you against your people, Sylvester. I might be a douchebag, and you and I might not see eye to eye on many things, but I did not do this. I did not send Bryce anywhere. I do not know why he will speak my name,” Dominic said and bowed.

“Your explanation isn’t good enough for me, Dominic. I will give you time to think about things, and then I will return. If you do not tell me the truth, I will hand you over to the council and wash my hands off the case,” Sylvester told him calmly.

“Mother was right when she said she needed to go get help because she doubted you would help me, since your woman controls you now,” Dominic said, looking at me scornfully.

“Matter of fact, she is right. I am a fool for my mate, and it will always be that way. You are lucky she isn’t evil or vindictive. You wouldn’t have been here if that was the case,” Sylvester told Dominic, and tears streamed down Dominic’s face.

“I didn’t do this, little brother. I swear on my wolf and everything I hold dear that I did not do this. Someone or some people are trying to set me up. Please do not let them win,” he pleaded with Sylvester in tears, and somehow I suspected the man was telling the truth.

It broke my heart to see them like this.

I decided I would come and speak to him alone.

“Let us go,” Sylvester said and turned his back.

“Please, Sylvester, I am begging you,” Dominic said in tears.

“The punishment of treason is death. I didn’t do this,” he pleaded, and I placed a hand over Sylvester’s shoulder.

“You can’t leave him here unprotected. He could be telling the truth. If he is, the culprits might try to finish the job,” I linked him, and Sylvester looked at me. His eyes lingered on me, and he looked at Dominic and then at Marcel.

“Lock him in a protection cell,” He ordered Marcel and led me out.

I noticed we were heading for the exit, and Marcel and Theodore were not behind us.

“where are we going?” I asked Sylvester.

“To see Larry,” he said, and I shook my head.

“I doubt it will yield anything,” I said, and he frowned.

“We are at a dead end. I need to know who is who in this, Tamia. My reputation and the peace of our world are at stake here,” He said, and I pulled him close to me. I could feel his panic.

~Devin~

I was sitting in my office when my beta, Lukman, walked into my office to announce Alpha Jake Brighton’s arrival. I thought my business with his pack was over. What was he doing in my pack? I did not want to seem rude, but I wasn’t in the mood for a guest.

“Let him in,” I told my beta.

Alpha Brighton walked into my office smiling, and I wondered what the occasion was.

“Good afternoon, Bane,” he said, and I plastered a fake smile on my face to avoid being rude.

“Hello, Brighton,” I told him, and he nodded and sat down without me offering him a seat. The man made himself comfortable.

“To what do I owe this visit?” I asked him, wanting to get straight to the point, and he sighed.

“I was laying on my bed last night thinking of how to improve my people’s lives when an idea popped into my head,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Shouldn’t you be discussing that with Volkov?” I asked, and he had an angry scowl on his face.

“I can never discuss my people with that bastard. He has done enough,” he said, and I wasn’t comfortable with his words. As much as I wanted to dissolve the rule of the north, I wasn’t comfortable having such a conversation.

Jake noticed and frowned at me.

“Did I come on a bad day?” he asked, and I wanted to say yes, but I shook my head and smiled at him.

I couldn’t be happy or enthusiastic about anything. There were just two months left to the blue moon. If I don’t do anything and Sylvester claims Tamia, I would have to kill him to get her back. I hope she isn’t in love with him. I needed to do something quickly.

“Care to elaborate?” I finally said, wanting to be rid of the man.

He smiled, adjusted his seat, and then looked at my shelf where I had drinks.

I deliberately didn’t offer him anything because I did not want to stand up.

“If you want some, you can pour yourself a glass,” I said, and he smiled and went to pour himself a glass of brandy. He took a sip and returned to sit down.

“I know what you did for my people was from the kindness of your heart, and I appreciate it,” he started, and I was attentive.

“I was hoping you could allow my people to work in your region. Mostly part-time odd jobs in construction and the factories,” he said, and I frowned at him.



“The income and experience will help develop my people, and if things get worse with the north, we can abandon our lands and settle down in your region as members of your pack. I am willing to let go of my leadership for the sake of my people,” he said, and I knew he was serious.

I had to respect the love he had for his people.

“I do not think that will be possible in the south because we are highly populated,” I said, and his smile dropped.

“But,” I added, and there was hope in his eyes.

“I plan on visiting Leonardo Albert in the east. They have land and jobs. Your people will be able to settle and work there. He might even give you land to use to lead your people.” I said, and he frowned at me.

“Are you his friend?” he asked, feeling awkward about my suggestion.

“We are acquainted, and I know they need people for manual labour due to the current issues they had with the north and the fact that some of their people have moved to the south,” I told him, and he smiled at me.

“When do you plan to visit him?” he asked, and I sighed.

“I have an appointment for tomorrow. Mind you, I have an issue to discuss with him already, so you will have to table your matter yourself,” I told him, and he nodded.

“What time do you leave for the east tomorrow?” he asked

“Ten in the morning. Mountain Pack isn’t far from Greenwood. I will be there in two hours.” I told him, and he nodded and stood up.

“I will return by eight tomorrow so we can leave for the place together.” He said, and I nodded.

Morning came, and Jake Brighton arrived earlier than eight. I knew he was desperate. I could see his desperation, and I hoped Leo would ease his mind and put a smile on his face.

The people of Brighton needed a break. It was sad I couldn’t give them that.

We arrived at Mountain on time. I expected Leo was waiting for me in his office. I had to commend the man for being civil.

We were offered drinks, and I opted to drink water instead. Beta Casper took us to Leo's office, but I asked Jake to wait so I could speak to Leo privately.

I entered Leo's office, and he was looking bedraggled. His beard had overgrown, and he had dark circles. I could tell he was not sleeping, but it wasn't my business.

"To what do I owe this visit, Alpha Devin?" He said. I did not know if he was in the right mood to discuss my concerns. I knew Tamia was the reason for his appearance. I did not understand why he did not treat her well when they were together. He must have thought she would always be with him hence why he accepted Amanda. It was his loss.

"Alpha Leo," I said.

"I do not know where to begin, but I need your help," I added, and he was attentive.

"I do not know how good your relationship is with Volkov, but I need you to help me inform Tamia that she is my fated," I said, and he exclaimed.

I knew I sounded like a madman, and it wasn't far from the truth, but I needed her to know so she would know that her fated was out there and he was waiting for her. I was hopeful that would buy me time.

"I do not think that will be possible. She is Sylvester's property now. I, too, wish I could take her back, but we both know the Wolf Lord never lets go of his trophies." He said, and I realised he had not heard of the wedding.

"I am desperate. Please help me. My wolf and I have been suffering. You know what it is like. You have a fated. Every day I lay awake wishing I had taken her away from that dinner and dealt with the consequences later. That way, she would have been mine, and Sylvester wouldn't have her because

she wouldn't be in the east to begin with. Please, Leo, I will give anything for you to tell her the truth about me," I pleaded desperately, and he leaned forward.

“Why are you desperate? I told you Sylvester sounded possessive of her. I doubt he will let her go. She is his trophy. The best advice I could give you is to try and visit their annual sports in four months. The trophies are allowed to attend. I plan on attending so I can see her too. She no longer bears my mark. She would recognise you, and then both of you can decide...” he said, but I interrupted him and shook my head.

“I do not have that much time, Leo,” I said and bowed.

“Sylvester will marry and claim her on the blue moon night. They have celebrated their engagement,” I said, and he exclaimed. I looked at him. His hands were shaking, and tears formed in his eyes immediately. It was clear he had not let go, and I had come to the wrong person for help.

“What?” he said in a low voice. I could hardly make out the sound if it weren’t for the fact that I could read lips.

“They are getting married, Leo. I am desperate.” I said.

“In that case, I will advise you to let her go,” he said, and I shook my head and banged my hand on the table.

“Don’t ask me to do what you couldn’t do, Leo. I just want you to help me.” I pleaded, my hands shaking.

“Please, I will give anything..” I said, and he shook his head.

“Did it occur to you that she is in love with him and wants to spend the rest of her life with him? Tamia isn’t the type to be forced into a union. I can’t take that bliss from her by telling her about you. I can’t. I know what happened to me with Amanda. My bliss was taken from me the moment I caught Amanda’s scent. It ruined my perfect life. It ruined everything that I held dear, Devin. I can’t allow Tamia to go through that kind of turmoil. It is easy to chase after your fated if you aren’t in love, but it is torture when you have already given your heart to another. No matter how strong the pull was, I could not stop loving Tamia.

I still love her, and I always will. If she is getting married to Sylvester, I will advise you to reject the bond and let her be. Please. She does not need to be torn between her heart’s desire and fate. It wasn’t easy for me; I do not want her to have the same experience,” he pleaded with me. Although the news seemed to break his heart, he was still looking out for her.

"I can't let her be. I can't," I told him my truth, and he sighed.

"Then I wish you the best, but I won't help you to mess Tamia up," I told him, and I was mad that he would see my plea as an attempt to mess Tamia up. I did not understand his logic, but I knew he was still hurting. I had come to the wrong person for help. There was no way he would help me get with Tamia. He was selfish like that.

Jake Brighton was ushered into Leo's office, and he explained his matter to Leo.

"Why haven't you taken your idea to the north? I am sure the Wolf Lord will have a solution," Leo said, repeating my words, and Jake got angry.

"I can never go to that bastard for help. He imposed development tax on my people and then sent his enforcers to attack my people when we couldn't pay," he said, and Leo shook his head.

"I do not think you should be quick to judge. I do not know what is happening in the north, but I doubt the Wolf lord did that to you. Two days ago, enforcers came here with a written order that we are to pay development taxes henceforth or face the consequences. I panicked, but my beta talked some sense into me. I called the Lord's office, and his beta was shocked. They never passed such an order. I

believe the issue was from the council. There is a possibility he doesn't know of the attack on your people." He said, and Jake shook his head.

"He is marrying your ex-wife. He wouldn't want her to see him as a monster by taxing and attacking her people." Brighton said, making a valid point, and Leo sighed.

"Very well. I still doubt the lord had something to do with it, but I am willing to offer your people part-time jobs. I cannot let them settle here because you are under the north, and I do not want trouble with the north," he said.

Jake was happy about Leo's response. It was clear he wasn't expecting to get anything from it, but Leo came through.

I thanked Leo for his time, even though he did not agree to help me. I understood his position but could not give up on my fated.

Jake and I returned to Greenwood, and I teased him about his pack being named after his last name, and he found it funny.

“It was a settlement, and my ancestor was the alpha. It was called Brighton’s pack, and as they grew, the settlement became a village, and it was named after the pack,” he explained, and I laughed. I knew he would soon retire, which was why he was taking all the steps necessary to secure his people and help his son rule with ease. I had to commend him for it. I would have been happier if my father had been as strong as him.

Jake’s wife was taken from him by Lord Maurice Volkov. They were only nineteen when it happened, but he held firm for the sake of their twins and was still holding firm. I respected the man greatly.

“I would like you to visit Brighton, so I can host you, Devin. You have been most kind to us. I want my son and daughter to meet you. I think you can come and unwind in Brighton. We might not be developed, but our environment is serene and good for the soul,” he said, and it sounded like a good idea because I needed to think, and I couldn’t do that with my mind muddled up.

~Tamia~

I could feel Sylvester’s uneasiness about my trip to the western village. I did not know how to tell him I could never leave him.

After our discussion, he insisted that we visit Larry.

He wanted to get to the bottom of the matter, and I needed to figure out how to stop him from wasting his time.

I was feeling nauseous, so I went to the bathroom to throw up my stomach’s content.

Sylvester rushed to the bathroom, a bit worried. He carried me to the shower and turned on the water while he took off my clothes.

“I noticed you were slightly warm last night but didn’t think much of it. Now you are burning up. What is happening?” he asked me calmly, and I could see he was fighting every fibre of his being from acting out.

"It started after we had tea and biscuits yesterday afternoon. I threw it all up and felt better, but the nausea is back," I managed. The water was soothing, and I wanted to stay under it.

"Who served the snacks?" He asked, and I knew what he wanted to imply, so I shook my head.

"I doubt they did anything to the food, darling. I made the person that served it taste it," I said, withholding the person's name, and he was silent. Once I was calm, he carried me to the bed.

"You can't go to Brighton tomorrow in this condition," he said, and I smiled because I was already feeling better.

"Nice try, Alpha," I said and touched his nose. He did not smile.

"Let me call the doctor?" he said, and I knew how important going to Brighton was, so I shook my head and sat up, pretending to be strong.

"I feel better. You will be wasting your time. I believe the stress caused it, and something might have irritated my stomach from breakfast. Come on. Let us visit Larry." I said, and he frowned at me for a bit before finally accepting.

We got dressed and left the room. The moment we walked past Stephanie's room, I became nervous.

"Where do you think your mother went to?" I asked, and Sylvester shook his head.

"I do not know, and honestly, I can't be bothered. No matter who she brings to plead with me to let Dominic go, I won't listen. Sadly, she does not understand the gravity of Dominic's offence," he said, and I touched his hands.

"I do not think your brother did it, Sylvester. I believe him. He is too proud to beg like that. Someone wants him to take the fall. We need to question Bryce, not Larry, and you must ensure the council does not get their hands on Dominic. If they do, he would be found guilty. I doubt they would go through the stress of finding the truth. See how they handled the matter that concerned you. They did not do any investigation to figure out what was going on. They tried to blame you for the crime. They are either a bunch of lazy idiots or against the Volkov family and want you to step down by all means.

Which is why you can't let them lay their hands on him." I said, and he pulled me close as we walked.

"If my mother only knew you meant well," he said and stopped to kiss the top of my head. Then he looked into my eyes and caressed my chin.

"Do not get your hopes up, green eyes. Dominic might disappoint you," he said, and I smiled at him.

We left the mansion, and a Jeep was waiting at the entrance.

We drove to Lucland silently, and Stephanie's trip did not sit well with me. I doubted she was going to get help. Whatever she planned on doing was extreme, and I knew it had to do with me.

I could not understand why the woman would blame me for this. I might have overstepped when I went to ask her to keep her son at home, and I might have said some things that scared her, but I have done nothing wrong.

I was troubled, and so was Kaira. Stephanie wasn't a good enemy to have.

Even though Sylvester had sided with me against her, and I knew she couldn't make him change his mind about me, I did not want their relationship to be damaged.

I remembered all the good times we had had with Stephanie and wondered if she had been pretending all along. I doubted it, though, because she seemed genuine. She loses her mind whenever it has to do with Dominic, and I needed to know why.

We arrived at the Northern prisons, and to my surprise, Sylvester asked to see Bryce instead of Larry.

"You changed your mind?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

"I want us to see Bryce first, and then we can check on Larry," he said, smiling, and I smiled back.

I could see he was stressed and worried, but he hid it well.

It wasn't easy knowing that faceless and nameless people were plotting against him.

I just hope he handles the pressure well.

We were led to an interrogation room.

The smell of the disinfectant they used to clean the place filled my nose, and I felt sick but held it. I knew if I showed any sign of sickness, Sylvester won't allow me to go to Brighton.

"May I have a glass of cold water?" I linked Sylvester, and he frowned at me. I smiled at him, so he won't think anything was wrong.

"Thirsty", I whispered, and he nodded.

Four chairs were in the room, and one was welded to a desk. I figured that was for the prisoner. I sat on one of the free chairs while Sylvester paced.

The water came, and it was freezing. Drinking it made me feel better. Bryce was ushered in a few minutes later and kept his eyes bowed.

"Look up," I ordered him to look into his eyes.

He refused until Sylvester ordered him to.

"You do whatever she tells you," he warned the man, and he apologised to me.

"Explain how Dominic sent you the order." Sylvester said, and Bryce looked down.

"Look up!" I ordered the man I went to stand beside Sylvester.

I doubted the man would tell the truth, but I needed to see his eyes.

"He called me to come to the estate. Then he handed the document to me and told me that his eminence wanted me to carry out the task quickly. That the east is supposed to pay development tax, and if they refuse, I should use force." he said, and Sylvester looked at him.

"Was he the one that asked you to request development tax from Brighton too?" Sylvester asked, but I doubted that was the right question because the council-owned up to it.



“That order came from the council”, he said, and I now understood what Sylvester was doing. He wanted to gauge his reaction. He wanted to understand how he behaved when he told the truth and compare it to his mannerisms when he spoke of his dealings with Dominic. Sylvester was a master.

“Tell me how Dominic called you. When he called, and the time and day you went to the estate?” Sylvester asked, and the man swallowed.

“He called me in the evening, and I went there an hour after his call. This happened five days ago,” he said, and Sylvester was satisfied, but I wasn’t.

“You were right, Tamia; he is lying,” Sylvester linked me.

This wasn’t Sylvester’s duty. His office places him higher than this. They would normally send Kappa William or kappa Wilson to do this. Sylvester must care for his brother to do it himself.

Although Sylvester had figured out the man was lying, Sylvester’s conviction was not enough to free Dominic. The council will still ask for him and will likely sentence him. It wasn’t enough. We did not only have to know Bryce was lying. We had to prove it.

“So you went to the estate in the evening five days ago to receive the order from Dominic Volkov,” I said, summarising his explanation, and Bryce nodded.

I was mad at the bastard but needed to back him into a corner without threatening him.

If I threatened him, his confession might be seen as something made under coercion, which might make it inadmissible.

“Your skin is so sensitive, Tamia; it feels like I am learning your body all over again,” Sylvester linked me, eating me up.

I grabbed onto his hair tightly and writhed.

I felt my orgasm coming, and I couldn’t control it. Everything was going straight to my head, and my skin was burning.

“Sylvester...” I moaned, and my body climaxed.

“I want to see your green eyes, Tamia,” he said and placed himself into me.

He knew I was sensitive, so he was gentle.

“So warm, so soft, so wet,” He moaned and started pumping, hitting the right spots. My body felt so different, and I loved it.

I watched his teeth elongate, and his eyes turn black. Knight was in charge, and he increased his speed.

“Mine,” He growled his famous words. Owning me with every pump, my body responded strongly. Taking it all and wanting more.

It got into my head, and I could no longer keep eye contact, feeling my orgasm coming.

I grabbed him, digging my nails into his skin, wanting everything he was ready to give and all of him.

“I am coming,” I moaned, unable to control my need anymore and shattered all over.

Knight pumped through my orgasm, making me feel like I had an out-of-body experience. If too much pleasure could kill, this would have been my death because he kept pumping, and I kept coming.

Every sense was heightened. Everything amplified. It had never felt this good, and I knew I would be wet every time I thought of this and would find myself running back to him.

He growled and poured into me. My pussy milked him for everything I could get. I felt his hands shake. He could no longer support his weight with it, and he gently lay on top of me to catch his breath.

I wrapped my arms around him and rubbed his back gently. Satisfied and glowing. Sylvester understood my body.

Soon he rolled off me to lie on the bed. Then I turned to the side to look at him. He smiled at me and then touched the tip of my nose gently.

“You know I do not want you in Brighton, but you are too stubborn.” He said, and we both laughed.

“You do not have to solve the mystery, green-eyes. Just come home in three days,” he said, and I smiled and nodded.

“It will feel like an eternity for me here. Not seeing you or being with you for three days would be torture. Please do not let it linger,” He pleaded, and I kissed him to assure him he had nothing to worry about.

He held me all through the night, and soon morning came.

Sylvester made love to me in the shower. We got dressed, and we were famished. So hungry that I felt like biting something. He laughed at my hunger, and we went to the breakfast room.

We walked past Stephanie’s room, and I felt a chill down my spine.

The woman’s absence and silence troubled me, but Sylvester did not think much of it, so I did not want to bring it up or take any measures, so he won’t think I was against his mother. I could only be lucky where she was concerned so many times. She was his mother, after all, and I know he loved her, regardless of her behaviour.

Everyone was in the lounge, and I noticed only Avery was dressed. Linda wasn’t dressed, and she did not seem happy.

I sat down and started dishing my food. At the same time, I greeted them individually with the utmost respect a hungry, freshly fucked woman could manage.

“You are really hungry,” Avery said and giggled.

“Alpha must have drained you,” she teased, and we both laughed, but Linda did not join in. She was upset.

“What is with her?” I linked Avery, and she stopped laughing.

“Theodore said no. He said he would not allow her to travel to Brighton in her condition.” she linked me back, and I felt sorry for her, but I could understand his reasons. She was at a delicate stage. She needed to be careful.

Linda was so angry that her mood affected everyone except my tummy. I ate the tarts, croissants, sandwiches. I sampled everything to eat on the table, and Sylvester was surprised.

“I believe they have good food in Brighton, Green eyes,” He said, and everyone laughed, including myself.

I felt terrible for Linda, but Theodore had a point: she was carrying his child, and we did not know what kind of stress we would experience in Brighton.

“You will use the jet,” Sylvester said, and I knew if I declined, he would insist. My intention was to arrive there covertly, but it seemed that would not be possible.

“There will be a chauffeur in Gad that will drive you to Brighton. The shadow warriors will be with you, but you won’t see them. They are good at hiding and trailing people, which is why they are called shadow warriors. I have instructed them to only interfere when your lives are in danger,” he said, and I nodded.

As much as I wanted to tell him it wasn’t necessary, I knew those were his conditions.

We got ready to leave, and Sylvester and Marcel decided to drive us to the hangar.

It was a covert mission, so no one was there except the pilot. Avery and I got into the jet.

We landed in Gad an hour later, and I realised the distance would have been torture if we had to drive through. The nausea was terrible, but I kept it together.

True to Sylvester’s words, a driver was waiting for us at the airport in Gad, and we proceeded to Brighton.

As we drove through, I realised Gad was a big city. I also saw a lot of electronic billboards paying homage to Sylvester. I honestly thought the west hated the Volkovs.

“These people seem to love Lord Volkov,” I said aloud, not wanting to call Sylvester by his name.

“Yes, Luna. Lord Sylvester was the one that brought development to Gad. It wasn’t different from Brighton. Where others pushed back, the people of Gad welcomed him, and this was the result. There are other parts of the west like this. After the development of Gad, people accepted him, and he has been working hard ever since. The west is grateful to be under his lordship.” Denis, the Chauffeur, said, and I hoped my work would be easy.

The drive was long, and I threw up twice during the journey.

When we got to Brighton, I could see the difference. It was indeed underdeveloped.

We were taken to a small hotel. It had only twenty rooms, and Avery and I decided to share.

I knew we would have to visit the Alpha, but I wanted to rest before I proceeded. I had seen the destruction the attack caused, and it broke my heart.

“How are you feeling?” Avery asked, handing me a glass of water. I sat on the bed in our room. The air conditioning was on, but I was sweating. I knew I needed to tell someone the truth.

I collected the bottle of water from her and drank the content.

She sat next to me and rubbed my back gently.

“After I threw up that day, I haven’t been feeling good,” I confessed.

“Does Sylvester know?” She asked, rubbing my back, and I shook my head.

“If I told him, he wouldn’t let me come, and you know how important it is for us to do this ourselves,” I said, and she nodded.

“Marcel knows if they come here, the people would attack. He felt we should have left the council to handle it,” She said, and I rolled my eyes.

“Not when the perpetrators are nameless and faceless. We are the only people who can protect their reputation and ensure peace,” I told her and further explained what we had learned from the enforcer. She was in shock.

“Poor Dominic. I know he is a douchebag, but he did not deserve that humiliation. I can understand Stephanie’s grudge. Where is she, by the way?” Avery asked, and my stomach churned.

“I believe she is part of the reason I am ill, Ave,” I said, and my friend frowned.

“That woman has it in for me. I know Sylvester loves me and will always side with me, but I do not want to deal with unnecessary stress, and I am afraid of the extent of the damage she might cost. I also would not want her and

Sylvester to be estranged.” I confessed feeling emotional about it, and she hugged me.

I let my tears fall freely, realising I had been holding so much in with no outlet. I didn’t want Sylvester to know it bothered me because he had a lot on his plate.

“What about Larry?” She asked, and the thought of Larry made me giggle. I wiped away my tears, laughing.

“Sylvester knows he is innocent but wants to keep him a while longer,” I said, and she laughed.

“I must agree with him on that one. The old man is obnoxious,” She said, and we giggled.

We ordered lunch and then prepared to visit Alpha Jake Brighton. I was nervous about meeting him, but I was hopeful.

Denis took us to the Alpha’s house. A blonde-haired woman about twenty years old let us in. The Alpha lived comfortably, and I was glad his home wasn’t destroyed.

Avery and I sat on the couch in the living room, and soon Alpha Jake joined us. He wasn’t smiling and came to sit down.

“To what do I owe this visit, Luna Albert?” He asked, and I wished he wouldn’t call me that.

“Just call me Tamia. I am yet to wed the lord, and I no longer bear Leonardo Albert’s mark.” I said with a smile, and he nodded.

“So he sent his woman,” he said, referring to Sylvester.

“He wanted to come himself, but I insisted I come in his stead,” I said, and he looked away and cursed under his breath.

“Alpha Brighton, Lord Volkov had no hand in this,” I said, and he stood up. His hands were shaking, and his mouth was quivering.

“His father took my wife and sister, and now he sent his men to kill my people,” He said, and I could understand his pain.

“We are trying to get to the bottom of the issue, Alpha. We are trying to fix the problem. Someone is working against Sylvester to force him to lose favour and step down. Please Alpha. If this person succeeds, judging by their methods, the four regions would not have it easy,” I said, and he shook his head.

“Alpha Corrigan’s region is secured. Nothing can happen to the south. I will just go and live there with my people,” he said, and I nodded.

“There is no place like home, Alpha,” I said, and he shook his head.

“What do you want, Lady Tamia?” He asked me, and I was about to speak when I felt like throwing up. Avery noticed immediately and asked for their bathroom.

We returned to the living room, and Alpha Jake looked worried.

“You do not seem well. Why will he send you or even let you come?” He said, and I shook my head immediately.

“He didn’t, I insisted,” I managed, and then he sighed.

“I must commend your effort, Luna. Your ex-husband told me the same thing. Let us say that is the case; how can we protect ourselves?” He asked, and I was amazed by his switch but knowing Leo had spoken to him already made me realise he believed Leo but just wanted to hold on to his grudge.

“You can call the Alpha, Beta or Gamma directly to confirm anything henceforth. To show our goodwill, the lord will be footing development projects in Brighton to fix the damage and improve the living standard of the people,” I said, and the man was grinning from ear to ear.

My words must be like music to his ears, and I was glad to put his mind at ease.

“Do you know the name of the enforcer that brought the tax order and led the attack on Brighton?” I asked, and he smiled.

“Councilwoman Pamela sent the tax increment order, but as for the Kappa that attacked, he said he was from Lord Volkov. He told us who sent him before they did their deed,” he explained.

“Did you get his name?” I asked, and he shook his head.

“But I can recognise his face,” He said, and that was good enough for me.

“I will be hosting a small luncheon at the Volkov Estate in a few weeks. I am personally inviting you to come and secretly identify the bastard by looking through the pictures of every kappa warrior that belongs to the north. Do you think it is something you can do?” I asked, and he nodded.

“I would like you to attend a Brighton festival tomorrow night. Some alphas will be in attendance. Kindly have your driver move your belongings to my home. It is wrong to have my future luna, Lady of the north, staying in a hotel. I must say, I see why Lord Volkov chose you,” He said, as much as I wanted to decline and just leave in the morning. I knew it would be rude and spoil the little progress I had made with the man, so I obliged him.

~Tamia~

Avery and I insisted on sharing the same room. Alpha Jake offered to have his pack doctor examine me, but I refused. I planned on managing the condition until I got back to the north.

“That went well; too well, I must say,” Avery linked me, trying to be cautious, and I smiled at her.

“He believed Leo when he told him but still felt insulted until I showed up,” I linked her back, explaining my deduction.

“Alpha Jake Brighton is an old-fashioned man. He expected word to have gone to Sylvester’s ears of the atrocity in Brighton, and he expected Sylvester to apologise personally even though he had no hand in it. It is an ego thing for the old man, nothing more.” I linked Avery, and she laughed.

“What do you think about Councilwoman Pamela? The woman reeks of treachery,” Avery said aloud, and I laughed. It would be unwise for us to remain silent all through the room.

Being former Lunas of top packs, we understood the politics. Alpha Brighton wanted to keep an eye on us and our activities in his territory, so he offered we stay in his house; I was sure people were listening to our conversation.



We had dinner with Alpha Jake, Mikail, his nephew, Iris, his daughter and Donald, his son. His son and nephew were about my age, and I figured Donald would succeed his father soon. His daughter, Iris, kept staring at us during dinner, and I was a bit uncomfortable, but I let it be.

We ate in silence and returned to our room.

“Donald did not seem to like us. I do not know what his deal is. Jake’s nephew, Mikail, was worse. He kept staring at us. Honestly, I can’t wait to be out of this place,” Avery said, lying next to me, and I smiled. The feeling was mutual.

“I am missing Marcel,” She said and sighed.

“He didn’t want me to come, but I insisted. Right now, I just want to head back to the north and never leave his side. It has just been a few hours, and I am missing him so badly,” She said, and I smiled because I felt the same way.

I wondered what Sylvester was doing. As much as I wanted to place a call, it was best I didn’t.

I was about to fall asleep when my phone rang. I did not need to guess who it was. I answered in a heartbeat.

“Miss me already, Green eyes?” he said, and I giggled on the phone.

“More than you can imagine. Would have returned in the morning, but Alpha Jake invited us to a festival tomorrow evening, so we will return after the festival,” I said, and he grumbled on the phone.

We talked about his day, and I handed the phone to Avery to speak with Marcel. Apparently, she did not come with her phone.

We said good night and fell asleep.

We had breakfast in the morning with our host and his children, and it was a very uncomfortable one.

“When are you two leaving?” Donald asked with a very disrespectful tone, and his father cautioned him.

“You might choose to be silent, but I won’t. They are marrying the men that attacked their people and took them away from their husbands. If it isn’t

shameless and a desperate act of social climbing, then I do not know what is. Yet we welcome them to our home, allow them to eat at our table and pretend everything is okay. Mikail doesn't have a mother because of the Dark Alpha; my mother was taken from me because of the Dark Alpha. Yet we are here. I say these eastern whores should be ashamed of themselves," He said, and I put down my cutlery and wiped my mouth.

His father was going to speak when I stopped him.

"It is easy to point fingers, call people names and judge them when you do not have the full picture. It is easy to speak about loyalty and moral values when you have not experienced certain things, and judging people looking from the outside is easy. You call us whores and wicked. You call my mate vile and evil, but he was our saviour. Where was your moral compass when my ex-husband broke his promises and forced me to live with his fated, and I lost my rights and standing as luna? Where was your moral compass when Avery's husband abused her and her wolf day and night, forced her to live with his mistress and placed the bitch above her? No one was willing to help, knowing what she was going through. These monsters revived our faith in love and gave us the strength and courage to try again. Sylvester wiped away my tears and gave me hope when I thought all was lost. My husband did not give me up; I gave myself up to get away from him. As for your mother and aunt, I sympathise with you, but Sylvester is nothing like Maurice. If you are too blind to see it, you need to look into the mirror and question your morals," I said, picking up my fork to continue the meal; I could not let it waste. No one said anything.

Alpha Brighton gave us a tour of the village. I saw many things that needed improvement, and I made mental notes to relay to Sylvester when I got home.

"Alpha Leo has offered my people part-time work to help with the income. He is truly a nice man." Jake said, and I smiled at him. I had always known Leo to have a big heart. I was glad the things that happened didn't take it from him.

"How is he?" I asked, eager to know how he was doing but reluctant to show my eagerness.

"He looks like he has seen better days; Alpha Corrigan said he is still hurting over you. I guess he needs closure," He said, and I was hurt to learn that my letter did not give him the closure he needed.

“After what you told my son during breakfast, I figured he did it to himself. I think he is finding it hard to forgive himself. I doubt there is anything you can do to help him. Besides, you seem pretty happy. I believe you love Volkov, or you would have used this opportunity to run away. He is a lucky man,” Jake said, and I thanked him.

“I hope Donald and Mikail will heal from what happened to them. Honestly, that is the reason I haven’t handed the pack over to Donald yet; he is about twenty-six and ready to take over, but I am afraid he would make a bad decision that would get him and our people into trouble.” He confessed, and I smiled at him.

“He will heal, Alpha. We all do,” I said, and he nodded.

“I am sorry about the initial reception. Please tell his eminence that I truly feel honoured that he sent you,” he said, and I smiled. He sighed and looked at Avery and me.

“You women have been through a lot and are still holding firm. You need all the strength you can manage in that place. The north is a political jungle of people wrestling for power.

Your places as lunas are never secure, so you have to be careful. Too many people want to be affiliated with the north. With all that has happened, the council is only partially loyal to the Lord. He needs to be careful. Maurice knew this, and that was why he was ruthless. Hence why I do not have a grudge against the old Lord. He needed to be a certain way so there would be peace in our world.

I know Sylvester is trying to be kind, but someone has to be stern, keep an eye open, and ears to the ground. He might be suffering a spillover of something from his father’s time. I am not sure, but some of us old Alphas know of the power struggle between the six ruling houses of the north,” He said, and I absorbed every word and then used that opportunity to ask him to elaborate.

“Do you mind telling me about the power struggle?” I asked, and he sighed.

“Let’s start with Stephanie Volkov,” He said, and my stomach churned.

“She is a nice woman, wasn’t treated well by her family and her mate, but she can be vindictive.” He said, and he noticed my countenance.

“Is there an issue?” he asked, and I shook my head

“Nothing, but I would like to know more about her, and you seem to be in the best position to tell me since you experienced when she was in power,” I said, and he laughed.

“There is nothing special about her. She wasn’t so bright. That was why Maurice preferred his fated to her,” he said, and I was in shock.

No one ever mentioned that Maurice had a fated or that Stephanie had to share him with his fated.

“A fated?” I asked the man, and he nodded.

“It was a well-kept secret. Stephanie is a member of the Belyaev family, so no one would dethrone her. His fated’s name was Lady Alissa Pavlishchev. She was from a small merchant family in Gad.

Stephanie would not share her title even though the Lord was and still is allowed to have more than one Lady. So she always ensured the woman was presented as one of his whores.

Maurice and Stephanie fought about it often, but when the Belyaevs threatened to divide the north, Maurice had to let comply. Hence, why Maurice became power-hungry and a monster.

I believe the man wanted to be so strong that no one would be able to threaten him as the Belyaevs did.

Maurice was able to take over completely and subdue them by wiping out the Belyaevs and their supporters, which were the Babanins and the part of the Lawrence family, leaving Stephanie powerless

and defenceless. Unfortunately, Alissa had passed away before he completed his mission, so he decided to keep Stephanie as his Lady and the only Lady of the north,” He said, and I was stunned.

“Stephanie made sure no one ever spoke of Alissa or remembered her. I doubt Lord Sylvester and Dominic even know her,” he said, and I could not believe how rotten the north was.

I kept all those names in mind and planned to start my investigation from there.

The tour was educative, and I was pleased Jake took the time to show us around and give us some history lessons that we wouldn't have been privy to had we remained in our cocoon at the estate.

I also realised that I needed to be extra careful where Stephanie was concerned. She was the type to always get what she wanted.

Alphas started arriving, and Jake had to excuse us to attend to his guest.

I noticed Iris was excited about it. Hopefully, she would find her mate and not live her life afraid of fate.

Avery and I were sleeping when a bang on the door woke us.

Someone was sent to inform us that the festival was at full blast, and we were needed at the high table to grace the event. We must have overslept.

Avery and I dressed and decided to grace the occasion as special guests from the north. I suspected we would be representing the Lord and beta. The festival was a full blast, and there was a lot of merriment.

We stayed away from alcohol because we had to remain sharp. Alpha Jake sent Iris to bring us to the high table.

We moved through the crowd, and I admired the lights display and merriment.

Seeing how these people turned their misfortune into joy and bounced back was amazing.

They were strong, and I admired them for it. Women, children, and men played and danced. There were bright colours everywhere, confetti and music. It was beautiful.

We headed to the high table, and then I caught his scent.

"Tamia..." Kaira said, nervous, excited and scared. What had just happened to us.

The scent called to me. It was alluring, strong and demanding, woody and musk, masculine in every way. It surrounded me and dominated me.

I was in a trance. My heart was beating really fast. I tried to think of Sylvester, but the thought of him never came. Who was this stranger that fate had tied me to?

I left Avery's side and stopped following Iris. I followed the scent. The owner was elusive. He knew of me and was leading me somewhere with his scent.

I knew what I was doing was stupid and dangerous, but I could not control myself. I kept telling myself to stop, but my wolf was giddy, and she wanted to know; she wanted to see him.

I walked briskly into a garden, and there he stood with a rose in his hand and fear in his eyes.

Tears formed immediately in my eyes. My heart was pounding, my hands were shaking, and my emotions were all over the place.

I now understood why. Why he did everything he did, and why everyone kept asking if there was anything between us?

Images of him at the party where we met flooded my mind. His attention, his boldness, his possessiveness. I looked at him and began to cry.

"Why didn't you say anything that night?" I asked him. A tear rolled down his cheek, and he bowed. His hand was shaking too.

## **Chapter 45 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna**

~Tamia~

Avery and Linda arrived in my room a few minutes after they had linked me.

They sat on the couch while I dressed up in Sylvester's clothes.

What happened with his mother baffled me, and I was nervous about what to expect from the woman.

The switch was disturbing, and somehow I knew it would not be easy onwards.

I did not need to guess whose side Sylvester was on. Stephanie had picked a dangerous game because I was bound to win.

I joined Avery and Linda on the couch, then linked the staff to serve us tea and biscuits.

“What is with Stephanie?” Avery asked me, looking curious.

“She was drinking in the lounge of this wing, and we went to say hello. She was very nasty to us. Calling us whores, backstabbers, thieves, name it, Tamia. She looked like she was out of it,” Avery said, and I sighed sadly.

“She is unhappy about what happened with Dominic and believes I was the mastermind behind his arrest. I am officially her enemy now,” I said, and Linda hissed.

“That is pathetic and silly. What do you have to gain from that? You already have it all. You will be the lady of the north in two months. Sylvester is indisputably yours. She is silly,” Linda said, sounding irritated.

“Actually, I did ask her to make sure that Dominic does not show up at the hearing, and I did imply that I will go against him if he troubles Sylvester,” I confessed, and Linda rolled her eyes.

“So what? The asshole deserves it and much more. Sometimes I suspect she didn’t give birth to Sylvester because of the way she is quick to side with Dominic against him, even if Dominic is in the wrong, and that douchebag is always in the wrong. I think it is an odd situation. I can understand favouritism, but this is too damn much. Screw her. We do not need her as our friend.” Linda said, and I giggled

Linda made a lot of sense, but I knew Stephanie was Sylvester’s mother.

“She disagrees with Sylvester’s policies. She wanted him to get justice for her husband. She wanted him to expand..” I said, and Avery began to laugh, interrupting me in the process.

“Really, who will get justice for all the people her husband wronged? Her husband ruined lives and wrecked homes. Bane is a hero. I do not care what people say,” Avery said, and I covered her mouth.

“Please do not say things like that. The walls have ears, and we do not want Stephanie to have anything against us.” I said, and Linda laughed.

Just then, Nancy walked in with our tea and biscuits, and I was worried she might have heard Avery. She was about to leave when I stopped her.

"I am sorry for what I am about to do, Nancy, but I will need you to taste the food. A lot is happening right now, and I am just being careful," I said, and Nancy smiled.

"It is alright, Luna," she said, tasted our teas, and ate our biscuits.

She stood for about ten minutes before I apologised and dismissed her.

"What was that about?" Avery asked, biting into her biscuit.

I placed the tea by my nose, and the scent was a bit strong, so I put it down and opted to drink the cranberry variation instead of the black tea.

"Stephanie hates us, and she was married to a psycho. I do not want to make mistakes," I said, and Linda laughed.

"What is wrong with the tea?" Avery asked me, and I shook my head.

"The smell is a bit too strong this afternoon. I wonder if the brand is what we are used to. I will ask Nancy." I said, and she nodded and opted to take the cranberry variation, too; likewise, Linda.

"So, who do you think it is?" Avery asked me the real reason they had come.

"I doubt it is Dominic; I think someone set him up to throw us off their scent. He is the most obvious culprit. It is just too easy," I said, and Linda laughed.

"Sometimes life can be easy, and the truth might really be what it is. Just look at how easily we found love again," she said, and I nodded.

"I am not disputing the fact that he might have a hand in this. Possibly, he did it, but he was too stupid to cover his tracks. It is a possibility, but between Brighton's attack and this, it does not seem like the same person." I said, and Avery nodded.

"I agree, but it still does not mean Dominic is innocent. He might have miscalculated or tried to copy the original crime hoping it would go a certain way," she said, and it made a lot of sense.



“Dominic was desperate to take over from his brother. The issue with Brighton must have given him the idea to try to replicate the same scenario with an alpha alleged to have teamed up with the enemy of the north. Either way, it would be a winning situation; it would have caused a war or forced Sylvester to step down.” I said, and Linda frowned.

“But if Sylvester steps down, it would leave the Volkov’s line and go to the Sidorovs, then the Orlovs. If neither Marcel nor Theodore cuts it, the north will have to choose between Dominic and Vino to lead

them. Neither of them is an alpha, but they would likely lean towards Dominic.” Linda said, and I nodded.

“You can put it that way, but we also have to consider Dominic’s friendship with Larry. Larry is the eldest on the council. He hates Sylvester and believes Dominic should take over from him. The man must have assured Dominic that he would force the council to endorse him. In exchange, Dominic will be his puppet and wage war, increase the power of the seat and the council and enrich the north,” I said, and they were silent.

“So, how is Sylvester handling it?” Avery asked, and I could not answer that question because I did not know.

“I think we should investigate this thing like we used to do back in the east,” Linda said.

“I do not think Theodore would want you to get involved,” I said, and she rolled her eyes. She wanted to do this for the thrill.

” Let us bring it up during dinner,” I said to them, and Avery agreed.

I decided to tell them what I really wanted.

“I know this might sound crazy.” I began, and everyone was attentive.

“It might even be unnecessary. There might be nothing to it,” I said and sighed.

“But we need to investigate Stephanie,” I said, and Avery frowned.

“Why? The woman is clearly unstable and a psycho, but that would be a waste of time because she would not want to work against her sons. There is

no way she would set either of them up. She is also a victim in this,” Avery said, and I nodded at my friend.

“I am not asking that we investigate her because of the event. She has no hand in this and can never actively work against her son. But I need to know what she has in store for Sylvester. She is always quick to side with Dominic against him, and there is that issue of Sylvester not wanting to get the revenge she wanted so badly. I need to protect my man from a woman that is hurting and trying to lash out.” I said and sighed.

”He told her to get out,” I confessed, and Linda gasped.

“And he sided with me against her. You needed to see the rage and scorn on her face when she realised he wouldn’t back her up. She said many implicating things that she only got away with because Sylvester is her son. There is no way Stephanie is going to let what happened today go. No matter what happens, I need to be a step ahead of her, and I need help,” I said, and Linda smiled.

Just then, I felt nauseous and rushed to the bathroom to vomit.

“What is the matter with you?” Linda asked me, and they joined me in the bathroom. Other than the tea and biscuits I ingested, there was nothing in my stomach. So when I threw everything up, I sat by the toilet seat, heaving.

Avery poured cold water overhead, and I sighed with relief because I was burning up.

“What is wrong with you?” Linda asked, looking concerned, and I shook my head

“I guess I am reacting to something in the tea or biscuits. It might also be because of the up-and-down feeling today. Everything has been crazy.” I said, feeling better.

“Maybe you should rest,” Avery said, and we left the bathroom and went back to the couch.

We talked about other things, watched a movie, and then they left.

Sylvester returned thirty minutes after they left, looking very angry and troubled.

He went to the bathroom immediately, and even though I wanted to join him, I wasn't feeling that great.

He lingered in the bathroom before coming to bed.

"Are we not going for dinner?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

He looked at me and held my hand.

"You look pale," he said with concern, and I smiled at him and caressed his cheeks gently.

"And you look tensed," I said, and he smiled at me and pulled me into his arms.

I placed my head against his chest, and he wrapped his arms around me. I felt his uneasiness, and I knew the issue with his brother troubled him.

"You need to be calm, darling. I know you care about Dominic, and I pray he is innocent too, but you need to be calm," I said, and he kissed the top of my head.

"I want you to join me in questioning him and Larry tomorrow. Do you think you are up for it?" He asked me, and I looked at him with a broad smile.

"That will be amazing. It will be more fun than anything I have been doing since I got here," I said, and he frowned at me, his dark eyes flashing. I wondered what I said to make Knight jealous.

"More fun than making love?" he asked, and I smiled broadly, shaking my head.

"No, definitely not," I said, and he smiled and tickled me.

"Did my mother come to this room after I left?" he asked, and I shook my head.

"We are definitely now enemies. I doubt she will come here knowing you aren't here," I said, and he nodded.

“She has taken a short trip, and for some reason, I am nervous because it has to do with Dominic,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Avery and Linda said they saw her in the lounge a few hours ago,” I said, and he nodded.

“The alcohol must have given her a bright idea,” he said, and it did not sit well with me.

A desperate woman would do anything. Stephanie’s judgement could not be trusted at the moment.

“Did you have her followed?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

“I doubt I need to have her followed, Tamia. She is just angry. Besides, she is my mother. I can’t treat her like a suspect in a crime,” he said, and I nodded even though I disagreed with him.

I honestly wished he had her followed. Deep down, I doubted her trip had anything to do with Dominic’s freedom.

After hearing what Avery told me she said to them on their way to my room, I knew she believed I had masterminded everything.

She had also implied that my position with Sylvester wasn’t a given and that two months was time enough for things to change. I wondered what my new antagonist had in store for me. I prayed silently for the strength to overcome.

~Tamia~

Morning came, and Sylvester and I got ready for breakfast.

It was going to be a busy day, but I was not feeling up to it.

I was a bit tired even though we didn’t do anything and I had just woken up from sleep.

I did not think much of it and just got ready quietly.

Once we were done getting ready, we went to the dining room to have breakfast.

Everyone was there as always, and we ate in silence.

What happened with Dominic had brought gloom into our lives. I hoped the matter was solved quickly.

I prayed it did not linger because we all deserved better.

Our love was still young; we were still getting to know each other and trying to manoeuvre through our differences to accept them and make it work. This matter needed to be solved as soon as possible.

“Tamia will be accompanying us to question Dominic and Larry,” Sylvester announced, and Marcel nodded.

“I want Avery to come with us too,” Marcel said, and Sylvester didn’t seem okay with it, but he did not complain.

Theodore requested to bring Linda along, and I touched Sylvester’s lap to stop him from making a scene.

I could not really eat, so I just pushed my food about the plate picking the bits and stalling for breakfast to be over.

We finished, and Sylvester decided to go to the cells on the property to question Dominic.

As we moved towards the place, I remembered when Dominic attacked my friends and me and locked us up because of councilwoman Jenny’s death and the attack on his mother.

I was still baffled why the attackers spared Stephanie’s life. It really didn’t add up.

When we got there, we noticed Dominic outside his cell in chains standing with some officers.

“What is going on here?” Sylvester growled. He was angry.

“What is the council task force doing here?” he asked, and the men saluted him and bowed their heads immediately.

“Your eminence, the council has ordered that we move him to the council prison,” One of them said.

“Under whose orders and why?” Sylvester asked.

“It was a collective decision by all council members. The act of treason is judged and punished by the council,” The man said and handed Sylvester a paper.

Sylvester did not bother to read the piece of paper. He just tore it.

“Out of my house now!” he ordered them, and they shook; even I shook because there was an authority in his voice.

We let them leave, and Sylvester’s Kappas ushered Dominic to a room.

We followed, and as soon as Dominic sat down, he looked at Sylvester.

“What would you gain in this? You already have it all. Why lock me up? First, your woman threatened mother to keep me at home, and now I am being tried for treason. What happened to you, Sylvester? We used to fight, but nothing like this,” He said with disbelief, and I could see he was genuinely hurt.

“It stopped being fair when you decided to forge my signature and seal and send Bryce to stir up shit in the east. You knew the development tax issue was false, yet you still chose to use that same method to cause trouble for me. Why?” Sylvester asked him, and he looked at me.

“Do not look at Tamia; focus on me, Dominic. I need to know why you would actively work against me,” he said, and Dominic’s eyes welled up with tears.

“If I tell you my truth, would you believe me?” Dominic asked, and Sylvester did not respond.

“Answer me!” Sylvester growled at his brother. The pressure was overwhelming, making me nauseous, but I held it. Beads of sweat formed on my forehead, and my vision was a bit blurry, but I tried to keep it together.

“I did not give anything to Bryce. He is lying against me, Sylvester. Mother asked me before she left to get help, and I told her the same thing. I did not do this. I have never given Bryce anything or sent him on an errand before. I was stunned when I was arrested, and his name came up as my accomplice.” Dominic said to his brother.

“Why would Bryce lie against you?” Sylvester asked, and Dominic looked at me.

“She wants to be rid of me. Can’t you see what she is doing? Mother told me how you treated her and insulted her because of this woman. Did it ever occur to you that she and her so-called ex might be trying to divide the strength of the north? Bryce might have collected money or something from Leo and Bane to do this. They need a reason to go to war. They might have done this to try to create the opportunity to attack. Do you not think it is weird she would just fall in love with you and want to spend the rest of her life with you? All three of you are blind. You destroyed their homes and took them away

from their mates. No matter how fucked up their marriage situation was, you can’t dispute that they loved their mates. Do not let them turn you against your people, Sylvester. I might be a douchebag, and you and I might not see eye to eye on many things, but I did not do this. I did not send Bryce anywhere. I do not know why he will speak my name,” Dominic said and bowed.

“Your explanation isn’t good enough for me, Dominic. I will give you time to think about things, and then I will return. If you do not tell me the truth, I will hand you over to the council and wash my hands off the case,” Sylvester told him calmly.

“Mother was right when she said she needed to go get help because she doubted you would help me, since your woman controls you now,” Dominic said, looking at me scornfully.

“Matter of fact, she is right. I am a fool for my mate, and it will always be that way. You are lucky she isn’t evil or vindictive. You wouldn’t have been here if that was the case,” Sylvester told Dominic, and tears streamed down Dominic’s face.

“I didn’t do this, little brother. I swear on my wolf and everything I hold dear that I did not do this. Someone or some people are trying to set me up. Please do not let them win,” he pleaded with Sylvester in tears, and somehow I suspected the man was telling the truth.

It broke my heart to see them like this.

I decided I would come and speak to him alone.

“Let us go,” Sylvester said and turned his back.

“Please, Sylvester, I am begging you,” Dominic said in tears.

“The punishment of treason is death. I didn’t do this,” he pleaded, and I placed a hand over Sylvester’s shoulder.

“You can’t leave him here unprotected. He could be telling the truth. If he is, the culprits might try to finish the job,” I linked him, and Sylvester looked at me. His eyes lingered on me, and he looked at Dominic and then at Marcel.

“Lock him in a protection cell,” He ordered Marcel and led me out.

I noticed we were heading for the exit, and Marcel and Theodore were not behind us.

“where are we going?” I asked Sylvester.

“To see Larry,” he said, and I shook my head.

“I doubt it will yield anything,” I said, and he frowned.

“We are at a dead end. I need to know who is who in this, Tamia. My reputation and the peace of our world are at stake here,” He said, and I pulled him close to me. I could feel his panic.

~Devin~

I was sitting in my office when my beta, Lukman, walked into my office to announce Alpha Jake Brighton’s arrival. I thought my business with his pack was over. What was he doing in my pack? I did not want to seem rude, but I wasn’t in the mood for a guest.

“Let him in,” I told my beta.

Alpha Brighton walked into my office smiling, and I wondered what the occasion was.

“Good afternoon, Bane,” he said, and I plastered a fake smile on my face to avoid being rude.

“Hello, Brighton,” I told him, and he nodded and sat down without me offering him a seat. The man made himself comfortable.



“To what do I owe this visit?” I asked him, wanting to get straight to the point, and he sighed.

“I was laying on my bed last night thinking of how to improve my people’s lives when an idea popped into my head,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Shouldn’t you be discussing that with Volkov?” I asked, and he had an angry scowl on his face.

“I can never discuss my people with that bastard. He has done enough,” he said, and I wasn’t comfortable with his words. As much as I wanted to dissolve the rule of the north, I wasn’t comfortable having such a conversation.

Jake noticed and frowned at me.

“Did I come on a bad day?” he asked, and I wanted to say yes, but I shook my head and smiled at him.

I couldn’t be happy or enthusiastic about anything. There were just two months left to the blue moon. If I don’t do anything and Sylvester claims Tamia, I would have to kill him to get her back. I hope she isn’t in love with him. I needed to do something quickly.

“Care to elaborate?” I finally said, wanting to be rid of the man.

He smiled, adjusted his seat, and then looked at my shelf where I had drinks.

I deliberately didn’t offer him anything because I did not want to stand up.

“If you want some, you can pour yourself a glass,” I said, and he smiled and went to pour himself a glass of brandy. He took a sip and returned to sit down.

“I know what you did for my people was from the kindness of your heart, and I appreciate it,” he started, and I was attentive.

“I was hoping you could allow my people to work in your region. Mostly part-time odd jobs in construction and the factories,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“The income and experience will help develop my people, and if things get worse with the north, we can abandon our lands and settle down in your region as members of your pack. I am willing to let go of my leadership for the sake of my people,” he said, and I knew he was serious.

I had to respect the love he had for his people.

“I do not think that will be possible in the south because we are highly populated,” I said, and his smile dropped.

“But,” I added, and there was hope in his eyes.

“I plan on visiting Leonardo Albert in the east. They have land and jobs. Your people will be able to settle and work there. He might even give you land to use to lead your people.” I said, and he frowned at me.

“Are you his friend?” he asked, feeling awkward about my suggestion.

“We are acquainted, and I know they need people for manual labour due to the current issues they had with the north and the fact that some of their people have moved to the south,” I told him, and he smiled at me.

“When do you plan to visit him?” he asked, and I sighed.

“I have an appointment for tomorrow. Mind you, I have an issue to discuss with him already, so you will have to table your matter yourself,” I told him, and he nodded.

“What time do you leave for the east tomorrow?” he asked

“Ten in the morning. Mountain Pack isn’t far from Greenwood. I will be there in two hours.” I told him, and he nodded and stood up.

“I will return by eight tomorrow so we can leave for the place together.” He said, and I nodded.

Morning came, and Jake Brighton arrived earlier than eight. I knew he was desperate. I could see his desperation, and I hoped Leo would ease his mind and put a smile on his face.

The people of Brighton needed a break. It was sad I couldn’t give them that.

We arrived at Mountain on time. I expected Leo was waiting for me in his office. I had to commend the man for being civil.

We were offered drinks, and I opted to drink water instead. Beta Casper took us to Leo’s office, but I asked Jake to wait so I could speak to Leo privately.

I entered Leo's office, and he was looking bedraggled. His beard had overgrown, and he had dark circles. I could tell he was not sleeping, but it wasn't my business.

"To what do I owe this visit, Alpha Devin?" He said. I did not know if he was in the right mood to discuss my concerns. I knew Tamia was the reason for his appearance. I did not understand why he did not treat her well when they were together. He must have thought she would always be with him hence why he accepted Amanda. It was his loss.

"Alpha Leo," I said.

"I do not know where to begin, but I need your help," I added, and he was attentive.

"I do not know how good your relationship is with Volkov, but I need you to help me inform Tamia that she is my fated," I said, and he exclaimed.

I knew I sounded like a madman, and it wasn't far from the truth, but I needed her to know so she would know that her fated was out there and he was waiting for her. I was hopeful that would buy me time.

"I do not think that will be possible. She is Sylvester's property now. I, too, wish I could take her back, but we both know the Wolf Lord never lets go of his trophies." He said, and I realised he had not heard of the wedding.

"I am desperate. Please help me. My wolf and I have been suffering. You know what it is like. You have a fated. Every day I lay awake wishing I had taken her away from that dinner and dealt with the consequences later. That way, she would have been mine, and Sylvester wouldn't have her because

she wouldn't be in the east to begin with. Please, Leo, I will give anything for you to tell her the truth about me," I pleaded desperately, and he leaned forward.

"Why are you desperate? I told you Sylvester sounded possessive of her. I doubt he will let her go. She is his trophy. The best advice I could give you is to try and visit their annual sports in four months. The trophies are allowed to attend. I plan on attending so I can see her too. She no longer bears my mark. She would recognise you, and then both of you can decide..." he said, but I interrupted him and shook my head.

“I do not have that much time, Leo,” I said and bowed.

“Sylvester will marry and claim her on the blue moon night. They have celebrated their engagement,” I said, and he exclaimed. I looked at him. His hands were shaking, and tears formed in his eyes immediately. It was clear he had not let go, and I had come to the wrong person for help.

“What?” he said in a low voice. I could hardly make out the sound if it weren’t for the fact that I could read lips.

“They are getting married, Leo. I am desperate.” I said.

“In that case, I will advise you to let her go,” he said, and I shook my head and banged my hand on the table.

“Don’t ask me to do what you couldn’t do, Leo. I just want you to help me.” I pleaded, my hands shaking.

“Please, I will give anything..” I said, and he shook his head.

“Did it occur to you that she is in love with him and wants to spend the rest of her life with him? Tamia isn’t the type to be forced into a union. I can’t take that bliss from her by telling her about you. I can’t. I know what happened to me with Amanda. My bliss was taken from me the moment I caught Amanda’s scent. It ruined my perfect life. It ruined everything that I held dear, Devin. I can’t allow Tamia to go through that kind of turmoil. It is easy to chase after your fated if you aren’t in love, but it is torture when you have already given your heart to another. No matter how strong the pull was, I could not stop loving Tamia.

I still love her, and I always will. If she is getting married to Sylvester, I will advise you to reject the bond and let her be. Please. She does not need to be torn between her heart’s desire and fate. It wasn’t easy for me; I do not want her to have the same experience,” he pleaded with me. Although the news seemed to break his heart, he was still looking out for her.

“I can’t let her be. I can’t,” I told him my truth, and he sighed.

“Then I wish you the best, but I won’t help you to mess Tamia up,” I told him, and I was mad that he would see my plea as an attempt to mess Tamia up. I did not understand his logic, but I knew he was still hurting. I had come to the

wrong person for help. There was no way he would help me get with Tamia. He was selfish like that.

Jake Brighton was ushered into Leo's office, and he explained his matter to Leo.

"Why haven't you taken your idea to the north? I am sure the Wolf Lord will have a solution," Leo said, repeating my words, and Jake got angry.

"I can never go to that bastard for help. He imposed development tax on my people and then sent his enforcers to attack my people when we couldn't pay," he said, and Leo shook his head.

"I do not think you should be quick to judge. I do not know what is happening in the north, but I doubt the Wolf lord did that to you. Two days ago, enforcers came here with a written order that we are to pay development taxes henceforth or face the consequences. I panicked, but my beta talked some sense into me. I called the Lord's office, and his beta was shocked. They never passed such an order. I

believe the issue was from the council. There is a possibility he doesn't know of the attack on your people." He said, and Jake shook his head.

"He is marrying your ex-wife. He wouldn't want her to see him as a monster by taxing and attacking her people." Brighton said, making a valid point, and Leo sighed.

"Very well. I still doubt the lord had something to do with it, but I am willing to offer your people part-time jobs. I cannot let them settle here because you are under the north, and I do not want trouble with the north," he said.

Jake was happy about Leo's response. It was clear he wasn't expecting to get anything from it, but Leo came through.

I thanked Leo for his time, even though he did not agree to help me. I understood his position but could not give up on my fated.

Jake and I returned to Greenwood, and I teased him about his pack being named after his last name, and he found it funny.

"It was a settlement, and my ancestor was the alpha. It was called Brighton's pack, and as they grew, the settlement became a village, and it was named

after the pack,” he explained, and I laughed. I knew he would soon retire, which was why he was taking all the steps necessary to secure his people and help his son rule with ease. I had to commend him for it. I would have been happier if my father had been as strong as him.

Jake’s wife was taken from him by Lord Maurice Volkov. They were only nineteen when it happened, but he held firm for the sake of their twins and was still holding firm. I respected the man greatly.

“I would like you to visit Brighton, so I can host you, Devin. You have been most kind to us. I want my son and daughter to meet you. I think you can come and unwind in Brighton. We might not be developed, but our environment is serene and good for the soul,” he said, and it sounded like a good idea because I needed to think, and I couldn’t do that with my mind muddled up.

~Tamia~

I could feel Sylvester’s uneasiness about my trip to the western village. I did not know how to tell him I could never leave him.

After our discussion, he insisted that we visit Larry.

He wanted to get to the bottom of the matter, and I needed to figure out how to stop him from wasting his time.

I was feeling nauseous, so I went to the bathroom to throw up my stomach’s content.

Sylvester rushed to the bathroom, a bit worried. He carried me to the shower and turned on the water while he took off my clothes.

“I noticed you were slightly warm last night but didn’t think much of it. Now you are burning up. What is happening?” he asked me calmly, and I could see he was fighting every fibre of his being from acting out.

“It started after we had tea and biscuits yesterday afternoon. I threw it all up and felt better, but the nausea is back,” I managed. The water was soothing, and I wanted to stay under it.

“Who served the snacks?” He asked, and I knew what he wanted to imply, so I shook my head.

"I doubt they did anything to the food, darling. I made the person that served it taste it," I said, withholding the person's name, and he was silent. Once I was calm, he carried me to the bed.

"You can't go to Brighton tomorrow in this condition," he said, and I smiled because I was already feeling better.

"Nice try, Alpha," I said and touched his nose. He did not smile.

"Let me call the doctor?" he said, and I knew how important going to Brighton was, so I shook my head and sat up, pretending to be strong.

"I feel better. You will be wasting your time. I believe the stress caused it, and something might have irritated my stomach from breakfast. Come on. Let us visit Larry." I said, and he frowned at me for a bit before finally accepting.

We got dressed and left the room. The moment we walked past Stephanie's room, I became nervous.

"Where do you think your mother went to?" I asked, and Sylvester shook his head.

"I do not know, and honestly, I can't be bothered. No matter who she brings to plead with me to let Dominic go, I won't listen. Sadly, she does not understand the gravity of Dominic's offence," he said, and I touched his hands.

"I do not think your brother did it, Sylvester. I believe him. He is too proud to beg like that. Someone wants him to take the fall. We need to question Bryce, not Larry, and you must ensure the council does not get their hands on Dominic. If they do, he would be found guilty. I doubt they would go through the stress of finding the truth. See how they handled the matter that concerned you. They did not do any investigation to figure out what was going on. They tried to blame you for the crime. They are either a bunch of lazy idiots or against the Volkov family and want you to step down by all means. Which is why you can't let them lay their hands on him." I said, and he pulled me close as we walked.

"If my mother only knew you meant well," he said and stopped to kiss the top of my head. Then he looked into my eyes and caressed my chin.

"Do not get your hopes up, green eyes. Dominic might disappoint you," he said, and I smiled at him.

We left the mansion, and a Jeep was waiting at the entrance.

We drove to Lucland silently, and Stephanie's trip did not sit well with me. I doubted she was going to get help. Whatever she planned on doing was extreme, and I knew it had to do with me.

I could not understand why the woman would blame me for this. I might have overstepped when I went to ask her to keep her son at home, and I might have said some things that scared her, but I have done nothing wrong.

I was troubled, and so was Kaira. Stephanie wasn't a good enemy to have.

Even though Sylvester had sided with me against her, and I knew she couldn't make him change his mind about me, I did not want their relationship to be damaged.

I remembered all the good times we had had with Stephanie and wondered if she had been pretending all along. I doubted it, though, because she seemed genuine. She loses her mind whenever it has to do with Dominic, and I needed to know why.

We arrived at the Northern prisons, and to my surprise, Sylvester asked to see Bryce instead of Larry.

"You changed your mind?" I asked him, and he shook his head.

"I want us to see Bryce first, and then we can check on Larry," he said, smiling, and I smiled back.

I could see he was stressed and worried, but he hid it well.

It wasn't easy knowing that faceless and nameless people were plotting against him.

I just hope he handles the pressure well.

We were led to an interrogation room.

The smell of the disinfectant they used to clean the place filled my nose, and I felt sick but held it. I knew if I showed any sign of sickness, Sylvester won't allow me to go to Brighton.



“May I have a glass of cold water?” I linked Sylvester, and he frowned at me. I smiled at him, so he won’t think anything was wrong.

“Thirsty”, I whispered, and he nodded.

Four chairs were in the room, and one was welded to a desk. I figured that was for the prisoner. I sat on one of the free chairs while Sylvester paced.

The water came, and it was freezing. Drinking it made me feel better. Bryce was ushered in a few minutes later and kept his eyes bowed.

“Look up,” I ordered him to look into his eyes.

He refused until Sylvester ordered him to.

“You do whatever she tells you,” he warned the man, and he apologised to me.

“Explain how Dominic sent you the order.” Sylvester said, and Bryce looked down.

“Look up!” I ordered the man I went to stand beside Sylvester.

I doubted the man would tell the truth, but I needed to see his eyes.

“He called me to come to the estate. Then he handed the document to me and told me that his eminence wanted me to carry out the task quickly. That the east is supposed to pay development tax, and if they refuse, I should use force.” he said, and Sylvester looked at him.

“Was he the one that asked you to request development tax from Brighton too?” Sylvester asked, but I doubted that was the right question because the council-owned up to it.

“That order came from the council”, he said, and I now understood what Sylvester was doing. He wanted to gauge his reaction. He wanted to understand how he behaved when he told the truth and compare it to his mannerisms when he spoke of his dealings with Dominic. Sylvester was a master.

“Tell me how Dominic called you. When he called, and the time and day you went to the estate?” Sylvester asked, and the man swallowed.

“He called me in the evening, and I went there an hour after his call. This happened five days ago,” he said, and Sylvester was satisfied, but I wasn’t.

“You were right, Tamia; he is lying,” Sylvester linked me.

This wasn’t Sylvester’s duty. His office places him higher than this. They would normally send Kappa William or kappa Wilson to do this. Sylvester must care for his brother to do it himself.

Although Sylvester had figured out the man was lying, Sylvester’s conviction was not enough to free Dominic. The council will still ask for him and will likely sentence him. It wasn’t enough. We did not only have to know Bryce was lying. We had to prove it.

“So you went to the estate in the evening five days ago to receive the order from Dominic Volkov,” I said, summarising his explanation, and Bryce nodded.

I was mad at the bastard but needed to back him into a corner without threatening him.

If I threatened him, his confession might be seen as something made under coercion, which might make it inadmissible.

“Your skin is so sensitive, Tamia; it feels like I am learning your body all over again,” Sylvester linked me, eating me up.

I grabbed onto his hair tightly and writhed.

I felt my orgasm coming, and I couldn’t control it. Everything was going straight to my head, and my skin was burning.

“Sylvester...” I moaned, and my body climaxed.

“I want to see your green eyes, Tamia,” he said and placed himself into me.

He knew I was sensitive, so he was gentle.

“So warm, so soft, so wet,” He moaned and started pumping, hitting the right spots. My body felt so different, and I loved it.

I watched his teeth elongate, and his eyes turn black. Knight was in charge, and he increased his speed.

“Mine,” He growled his famous words. Owning me with every pump, my body responded strongly. Taking it all and wanting more.

It got into my head, and I could no longer keep eye contact, feeling my orgasm coming.

I grabbed him, digging my nails into his skin, wanting everything he was ready to give and all of him.

“I am coming,” I moaned, unable to control my need anymore and shattered all over.

Knight pumped through my orgasm, making me feel like I had an out-of-body experience. If too much pleasure could kill, this would have been my death because he kept pumping, and I kept coming.

Every sense was heightened. Everything amplified. It had never felt this good, and I knew I would be wet every time I thought of this and would find myself running back to him.

He growled and poured into me. My pussy milked him for everything I could get. I felt his hands shake. He could no longer support his weight with it, and he gently lay on top of me to catch his breath.

I wrapped my arms around him and rubbed his back gently. Satisfied and glowing. Sylvester understood my body.

Soon he rolled off me to lie on the bed. Then I turned to the side to look at him. He smiled at me and then touched the tip of my nose gently.

“You know I do not want you in Brighton, but you are too stubborn.” He said, and we both laughed.

“You do not have to solve the mystery, green-eyes. Just come home in three days,” he said, and I smiled and nodded.

“It will feel like an eternity for me here. Not seeing you or being with you for three days would be torture. Please do not let it linger,” He pleaded, and I kissed him to assure him he had nothing to worry about.

He held me all through the night, and soon morning came.

Sylvester made love to me in the shower. We got dressed, and we were famished. So hungry that I felt like biting something. He laughed at my hunger, and we went to the breakfast room.

We walked past Stephanie's room, and I felt a chill down my spine.

The woman's absence and silence troubled me, but Sylvester did not think much of it, so I did not want to bring it up or take any measures, so he won't think I was against his mother. I could only be lucky where she was concerned so many times. She was his mother, after all, and I know he loved her, regardless of her behaviour.

Everyone was in the lounge, and I noticed only Avery was dressed. Linda wasn't dressed, and she did not seem happy.

I sat down and started dishing my food. At the same time, I greeted them individually with the utmost respect a hungry, freshly fucked woman could manage.

"You are really hungry," Avery said and giggled.

"Alpha must have drained you," she teased, and we both laughed, but Linda did not join in. She was upset.

"What is with her?" I linked Avery, and she stopped laughing.

"Theodore said no. He said he would not allow her to travel to Brighton in her condition." she linked me back, and I felt sorry for her, but I could understand his reasons. She was at a delicate stage. She needed to be careful.

Linda was so angry that her mood affected everyone except my tummy. I ate the tarts, croissants, sandwiches. I sampled everything to eat on the table, and Sylvester was surprised.

"I believe they have good food in Brighton, Green eyes," He said, and everyone laughed, including myself.

I felt terrible for Linda, but Theodore had a point: she was carrying his child, and we did not know what kind of stress we would experience in Brighton.

“You will use the jet,” Sylvester said, and I knew if I declined, he would insist. My intention was to arrive there covertly, but it seemed that would not be possible.

“There will be a chauffeur in Gad that will drive you to Brighton. The shadow warriors will be with you, but you won’t see them. They are good at hiding and trailing people, which is why they are called shadow warriors. I have instructed them to only interfere when your lives are in danger,” he said, and I nodded.

As much as I wanted to tell him it wasn’t necessary, I knew those were his conditions.

We got ready to leave, and Sylvester and Marcel decided to drive us to the hangar.

It was a covert mission, so no one was there except the pilot. Avery and I got into the jet.

We landed in Gad an hour later, and I realised the distance would have been torture if we had to drive through. The nausea was terrible, but I kept it together.

True to Sylvester’s words, a driver was waiting for us at the airport in Gad, and we proceeded to Brighton.

As we drove through, I realised Gad was a big city. I also saw a lot of electronic billboards paying homage to Sylvester. I honestly thought the west hated the Volkovs.

“These people seem to love Lord Volkov,” I said aloud, not wanting to call Sylvester by his name.

“Yes, Luna. Lord Sylvester was the one that brought development to Gad. It wasn’t different from Brighton. Where others pushed back, the people of Gad welcomed him, and this was the result. There are other parts of the west like this. After the development of Gad, people accepted him, and he has been working hard ever since. The west is grateful to be under his lordship.” Denis, the Chauffeur, said, and I hoped my work would be easy.

The drive was long, and I threw up twice during the journey.

When we got to Brighton, I could see the difference. It was indeed underdeveloped.

We were taken to a small hotel. It had only twenty rooms, and Avery and I decided to share.

I knew we would have to visit the Alpha, but I wanted to rest before I proceeded. I had seen the destruction the attack caused, and it broke my heart.

“How are you feeling?” Avery asked, handing me a glass of water. I sat on the bed in our room. The air conditioning was on, but I was sweating. I knew I needed to tell someone the truth.

I collected the bottle of water from her and drank the content.

She sat next to me and rubbed my back gently.

“After I threw up that day, I haven’t been feeling good,” I confessed.

“Does Sylvester know?” She asked, rubbing my back, and I shook my head.

“If I told him, he wouldn’t let me come, and you know how important it is for us to do this ourselves,” I said, and she nodded.

“Marcel knows if they come here, the people would attack. He felt we should have left the council to handle it,” She said, and I rolled my eyes.

“Not when the perpetrators are nameless and faceless. We are the only people who can protect their reputation and ensure peace,” I told her and further explained what we had learned from the enforcer. She was in shock.

“Poor Dominic. I know he is a douchebag, but he did not deserve that humiliation. I can understand Stephanie’s grudge. Where is she, by the way?” Avery asked, and my stomach churned.

“I believe she is part of the reason I am ill, Ave,” I said, and my friend frowned.

“That woman has it in for me. I know Sylvester loves me and will always side with me, but I do not want to deal with unnecessary stress, and I am afraid of the extent of the damage she might cost. I also would not want her and Sylvester to be estranged.” I confessed feeling emotional about it, and she hugged me.

I let my tears fall freely, realising I had been holding so much in with no outlet. I didn't want Sylvester to know it bothered me because he had a lot on his plate.

"What about Larry?" She asked, and the thought of Larry made me giggle. I wiped away my tears, laughing.

"Sylvester knows he is innocent but wants to keep him a while longer," I said, and she laughed.

"I must agree with him on that one. The old man is obnoxious," She said, and we giggled.

We ordered lunch and then prepared to visit Alpha Jake Brighton. I was nervous about meeting him, but I was hopeful.

Denis took us to the Alpha's house. A blonde-haired woman about twenty years old let us in. The Alpha lived comfortably, and I was glad his home wasn't destroyed.

Avery and I sat on the couch in the living room, and soon Alpha Jake joined us. He wasn't smiling and came to sit down.

"To what do I owe this visit, Luna Albert?" He asked, and I wished he wouldn't call me that.

"Just call me Tamia. I am yet to wed the lord, and I no longer bear Leonardo Albert's mark." I said with a smile, and he nodded.

"So he sent his woman," he said, referring to Sylvester.

"He wanted to come himself, but I insisted I come in his stead," I said, and he looked away and cursed under his breath.

"Alpha Brighton, Lord Volkov had no hand in this," I said, and he stood up. His hands were shaking, and his mouth was quivering.

"His father took my wife and sister, and now he sent his men to kill my people," He said, and I could understand his pain.

"We are trying to get to the bottom of the issue, Alpha. We are trying to fix the problem. Someone is working against Sylvester to force him to lose favour and step down. Please Alpha. If this person succeeds, judging by their

methods, the four regions would not have it easy,” I said, and he shook his head.

“Alpha Corrigan’s region is secured. Nothing can happen to the south. I will just go and live there with my people,” he said, and I nodded.

“There is no place like home, Alpha,” I said, and he shook his head.

“What do you want, Lady Tamia?” He asked me, and I was about to speak when I felt like throwing up. Avery noticed immediately and asked for their bathroom.

We returned to the living room, and Alpha Jake looked worried.

“You do not seem well. Why will he send you or even let you come?” He said, and I shook my head immediately.

“He didn’t, I insisted,” I managed, and then he sighed.

“I must commend your effort, Luna. Your ex-husband told me the same thing. Let us say that is the case; how can we protect ourselves?” He asked, and I was amazed by his switch but knowing Leo had spoken to him already made me realise he believed Leo but just wanted to hold on to his grudge.

“You can call the Alpha, Beta or Gamma directly to confirm anything henceforth. To show our goodwill, the lord will be footing development projects in Brighton to fix the damage and improve the living standard of the people,” I said, and the man was grinning from ear to ear.

My words must be like music to his ears, and I was glad to put his mind at ease.

“Do you know the name of the enforcer that brought the tax order and led the attack on Brighton?” I asked, and he smiled.

“Councilwoman Pamela sent the tax increment order, but as for the Kappa that attacked, he said he was from Lord Volkov. He told us who sent him before they did their deed,” he explained.

“Did you get his name?” I asked, and he shook his head.

“But I can recognise his face,” He said, and that was good enough for me.



“I will be hosting a small luncheon at the Volkov Estate in a few weeks. I am personally inviting you to come and secretly identify the bastard by looking through the pictures of every kappa warrior that belongs to the north. Do you think it is something you can do?” I asked, and he nodded.

“I would like you to attend a Brighton festival tomorrow night. Some alphas will be in attendance. Kindly have your driver move your belongings to my home. It is wrong to have my future luna, Lady of the north, staying in a hotel. I must say, I see why Lord Volkov chose you,” He said, as much as I wanted to decline and just leave in the morning. I knew it would be rude and spoil the little progress I had made with the man, so I obliged him.

~Tamia~

Avery and I insisted on sharing the same room. Alpha Jake offered to have his pack doctor examine me, but I refused. I planned on managing the condition until I got back to the north.

“That went well; too well, I must say,” Avery linked me, trying to be cautious, and I smiled at her.

“He believed Leo when he told him but still felt insulted until I showed up,” I linked her back, explaining my deduction.

“Alpha Jake Brighton is an old-fashioned man. He expected word to have gone to Sylvester’s ears of the atrocity in Brighton, and he expected Sylvester to apologise personally even though he had no hand in it. It is an ego thing for the old man, nothing more.” I linked Avery, and she laughed.

“What do you think about Councilwoman Pamela? The woman reeks of treachery,” Avery said aloud, and I laughed. It would be unwise for us to remain silent all through the room.

Being former Lunas of top packs, we understood the politics. Alpha Brighton wanted to keep an eye on us and our activities in his territory, so he offered we stay in his house; I was sure people were listening to our conversation.

We had dinner with Alpha Jake, Mikail, his nephew, Iris, his daughter and Donald, his son. His son and nephew were about my age, and I figured Donald would succeed his father soon. His daughter, Iris, kept staring at us during dinner, and I was a bit uncomfortable, but I let it be.

We ate in silence and returned to our room.

“Donald did not seem to like us. I do not know what his deal is. Jake’s nephew, Mikail, was worse. He kept staring at us. Honestly, I can’t wait to be out of this place,” Avery said, lying next to me, and I smiled. The feeling was mutual.

“I am missing Marcel,” She said and sighed.

“He didn’t want me to come, but I insisted. Right now, I just want to head back to the north and never leave his side. It has just been a few hours, and I am missing him so badly,” She said, and I smiled because I felt the same way.

I wondered what Sylvester was doing. As much as I wanted to place a call, it was best I didn’t.

I was about to fall asleep when my phone rang. I did not need to guess who it was. I answered in a heartbeat.

“Miss me already, Green eyes?” he said, and I giggled on the phone.

“More than you can imagine. Would have returned in the morning, but Alpha Jake invited us to a festival tomorrow evening, so we will return after the festival,” I said, and he grumbled on the phone.

We talked about his day, and I handed the phone to Avery to speak with Marcel. Apparently, she did not come with her phone.

We said good night and fell asleep.

We had breakfast in the morning with our host and his children, and it was a very uncomfortable one.

“When are you two leaving?” Donald asked with a very disrespectful tone, and his father cautioned him.

“You might choose to be silent, but I won’t. They are marrying the men that attacked their people and took them away from their husbands. If it isn’t shameless and a desperate act of social climbing, then I do not know what is. Yet we welcome them to our home, allow them to eat at our table and pretend everything is okay. Mikail doesn’t have a mother because of the Dark Alpha; my mother was taken from me because of the Dark Alpha. Yet we are here. I

say these eastern whores should be ashamed of themselves,” He said, and I put down my cutlery and wiped my mouth.

His father was going to speak when I stopped him.

” It is easy to point fingers, call people names and judge them when you do not have the full picture. It is easy to speak about loyalty and moral values when you have not experienced certain things, and judging people looking from the outside is easy. You call us whores and wicked. You call my mate vile and evil, but he was our saviour. Where was your moral compass when my ex-husband broke his promises and forced me to live with his fated, and I lost my rights and standing as luna? Where was your moral compass when Avery’s husband abused her and her wolf day and night, forced her to live with his mistress and placed the bitch above her? No one was willing to help, knowing what she was going through. These monsters revived our faith in love and gave us the strength and courage to try again. Sylvester wiped away my tears and gave me hope when I thought all was lost. My husband did not give me up; I gave myself up to get away from him. As for your mother and aunt, I sympathise with you, but Sylvester is nothing like Maurice. If you are too blind to see it, you need to look into the mirror and question your morals,” I said, picking up my fork to continue the meal; I could not let it waste. No one said anything.

Alpha Brighton gave us a tour of the village. I saw many things that needed improvement, and I made mental notes to relay to Sylvester when I got home.

“Alpha Leo has offered my people part-time work to help with the income. He is truly a nice man.” Jake said, and I smiled at him. I had always known Leo to have a big heart. I was glad the things that happened didn’t take it from im.

“How is he?” I asked, eager to know how he was doing but reluctant to show my eagerness.

“He looks like he has seen better days; Alpha Corrigan said he is still hurting over you. I guess he needs closure,” He said, and I was hurt to learn that my letter did not give him the closure he needed.

“After what you told my son during breakfast, I figured he did it to himself. I think he is finding it hard to forgive himself. I doubt there is anything you can do to help him. Besides, you seem pretty happy. I believe you love Volkov, or you would have used this opportunity to run away. He is a lucky man,” Jake said, and I thanked him.

“I hope Donald and Mikail will heal from what happened to them. Honestly, that is the reason I haven’t handed the pack over to Donald yet; he is about twenty-six and ready to take over, but I am afraid he would make a bad decision that would get him and our people into trouble.” He confessed, and I smiled at him.

“He will heal, Alpha. We all do,” I said, and he nodded.

“I am sorry about the initial reception. Please tell his eminence that I truly feel honoured that he sent you,” he said, and I smiled. He sighed and looked at Avery and me.

“You women have been through a lot and are still holding firm. You need all the strength you can manage in that place. The north is a political jungle of people wrestling for power.

Your places as lunas are never secure, so you have to be careful. Too many people want to be affiliated with the north. With all that has happened, the council is only partially loyal to the Lord. He needs to be careful. Maurice knew this, and that was why he was ruthless. Hence why I do not have a grudge against the old Lord. He needed to be a certain way so there would be peace in our world.

I know Sylvester is trying to be kind, but someone has to be stern, keep an eye open, and ears to the ground. He might be suffering a spillover of something from his father’s time. I am not sure, but some of us old Alphas know of the power struggle between the six ruling houses of the north,” He said, and I absorbed every word and then used that opportunity to ask him to elaborate.

“Do you mind telling me about the power struggle?” I asked, and he sighed.

“Let’s start with Stephanie Volkov,” He said, and my stomach churned.

“She is a nice woman, wasn’t treated well by her family and her mate, but she can be vindictive.” He said, and he noticed my countenance.

“Is there an issue?” he asked, and I shook my head

“Nothing, but I would like to know more about her, and you seem to be in the best position to tell me since you experienced when she was in power,” I said, and he laughed.

“There is nothing special about her. She wasn’t so bright. That was why Maurice preferred his fated to her,” he said, and I was in shock.

No one ever mentioned that Maurice had a fated or that Stephanie had to share him with his fated.

“A fated?” I asked the man, and he nodded.

“It was a well-kept secret. Stephanie is a member of the Belyaev family, so no one would dethrone her. His fated’s name was Lady Alissa Pavlishchev. She was from a small merchant family in Gad.

Stephanie would not share her title even though the Lord was and still is allowed to have more than one Lady. So she always ensured the woman was presented as one of his whores.

Maurice and Stephanie fought about it often, but when the Belyaevs threatened to divide the north, Maurice had to let comply. Hence, why Maurice became power-hungry and a monster.

I believe the man wanted to be so strong that no one would be able to threaten him as the Belyaevs did.

Maurice was able to take over completely and subdue them by wiping out the Belyaevs and their supporters, which were the Babanins and the part of the Lawrence family, leaving Stephanie powerless

and defenceless. Unfortunately, Alissa had passed away before he completed his mission, so he decided to keep Stephanie as his Lady and the only Lady of the north,” He said, and I was stunned.

“Stephanie made sure no one ever spoke of Alissa or remembered her. I doubt Lord Sylvester and Dominic even know her,” he said, and I could not believe how rotten the north was.

I kept all those names in mind and planned to start my investigation from there.

The tour was educative, and I was pleased Jake took the time to show us around and give us some history lessons that we wouldn’t have been privy to had we remained in our cocoon at the estate.

I also realised that I needed to be extra careful where Stephanie was concerned. She was the type to always get what she wanted.

Alphas started arriving, and Jake had to excuse us to attend to his guest.

I noticed Iris was excited about it. Hopefully, she would find her mate and not live her life afraid of fate.

Avery and I were sleeping when a bang on the door woke us.

Someone was sent to inform us that the festival was at full blast, and we were needed at the high table to grace the event. We must have overslept.

Avery and I dressed and decided to grace the occasion as special guests from the north. I suspected we would be representing the Lord and beta. The festival was a full blast, and there was a lot of merriment.

We stayed away from alcohol because we had to remain sharp. Alpha Jake sent Iris to bring us to the high table.

We moved through the crowd, and I admired the lights display and merriment.

Seeing how these people turned their misfortune into joy and bounced back was amazing.

They were strong, and I admired them for it. Women, children, and men played and danced. There were bright colours everywhere, confetti and music. It was beautiful.

We headed to the high table, and then I caught his scent.

“Tamia...” Kaira said, nervous, excited and scared. What had just happened to us.

The scent called to me. It was alluring, strong and demanding, woody and musk, masculine in every way. It surrounded me and dominated me.

I was in a trance. My heart was beating really fast. I tried to think of Sylvester, but the thought of him never came. Who was this stranger that fate had tied me to?

I left Avery's side and stopped following Iris. I followed the scent. The owner was elusive. He knew of me and was leading me somewhere with his scent.

I knew what I was doing was stupid and dangerous, but I could not control myself. I kept telling myself to stop, but my wolf was giddy, and she wanted to know; she wanted to see him.

I walked briskly into a garden, and there he stood with a rose in his hand and fear in his eyes.

Tears formed immediately in my eyes. My heart was pounding, my hands were shaking, and my emotions were all over the place.

I now understood why. Why he did everything he did, and why everyone kept asking if there was anything between us?

Images of him at the party where we met flooded my mind. His attention, his boldness, his possessiveness. I looked at him and began to cry.

“Why didn’t you say anything that night?” I asked him. A tear rolled down his cheek, and he bowed. His hand was shaking too.