

Chapter 51 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna

~Tamia~

What a joke. Typically people are elated over something like this, but my heart was conflicted.

Every fibre of my being wanted him.

I wanted to throw away my love and promises and accept fate.

It was overwhelming and euphoric.

All that existed at that moment was him. Kaira wanted to jump and let him take us. I wanted to let her.

Devin looked up at me and came close to me.

His teary eyes searched mine, and I could see he was desperate. Desperate to have me and make me his. His eyes flashed golden, and I knew his wolf was in control.

Kaira wanted him. He touched my cheek with his palm, and I closed my eyes to feel his touch caressing my skin, enveloping me in his intoxicating scent.

“Mate,” His wolf said, and Kaira wanted to respond, but I held my lips. I searched his eyes, and they were expectant.

“Why didn’t you say anything that night?” I asked angrily that he had let the moment slip. If he had, I would be in the south and would have never gone to the north.

I was angry not because I went to the north, but because he knew I was suffering with Leo and didn’t make a move to take me from him.

“You sent me back to his house. You let me go back!” I yelled at him, tears streaming down my face, and he bowed.

“You knew I was suffering. You knew I was in pain. You had the power to take it away. You are Alpha, and you let me go,” I said and stepped back.

“Now you hold a rose and say, Mate?” I said, and Kaira pleaded with me to take it easy, but I was mad.

“Why Devin? Why didn’t you save me? Why didn’t you claim me? When I wanted my fated to come and rescue me, to take my pain away. I prayed so hard the goddess answered, but you weren’t willing.

“Why now? Do you hate Sylvester so much that you want to hurt him the worst way ever!” I said, and he shook his head, tears streaming down his face, looking misunderstood.

“No, Tamia,” he said, looking at me, and I stepped back.

“Then tell me why now? Why!” I yelled at him; my heart was beating so fast. I was fighting myself.

“I thought we had time. I wanted Leo to let you go before I stepped in,” he said, and I began to laugh.

“Leo would have never let me go! I had to give myself up as a tribute to get away from him,” I said, and he nodded.

“You didn’t want me then; why now?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

“I always wanted you. From the moment your apple and cinnamon scent filled my senses, I had wanted you. But I wanted to wait for the right moment, the perfect moment to make you mine. I wanted to do it properly. We had allied, and I did not want to have issues with Leo. I wanted to reason with him first,” he said.

“If you cared, you wouldn’t have waited for perfect conditions. You would have taken me from him that night. You would have made me yours,” I told him angrily.

“I wrote letters to alphas, pleading with them to let me join their pack, so I won’t go rogue when I leave Leo. Meanwhile, you were there all along, waiting for the perfect moment that would never come because the world doesn’t work that way, Devin. There is no such thing as perfect. It is an illusion, a lie we tell ourselves, and you gambled me away with that decision. You left me to rot with Leo and Amanda.”

He reached for me and crashed his lips on mine. Kissing me.

I wanted to push him away, but my body responded. He was tugging on the bond, and Kaira let him.

He moved to my sweet spot and sucked it grazing his teeth over it desperately,

“Green-eyes”, I heard Sylvester in my head, giving me the strength to push Devin away.

“That is dubious,” I said, shaking my head.

“Please, Tamia, you do not have to return to him. Come with me. I will protect you. I will fight him,” He said, and I laughed.

“You didn’t want to fight Leo for my sake, but you are willing to fight Sylvester?” I said, and he nodded.

“I won’t let you use me as bait for your Wolf Lord agenda. I refuse to be used,” I told him, and he pulled me close and shook his head.

“I do not want to be wolf lord anymore; I just want my mate.” He pleaded with me.

“All my life, I waited for you. Never made promises to anyone, and hoping to find you. Do you know how heartbroken I was when I saw Leo’s mark on your neck? I was broken,” he said, and I shook my head.

“Not enough to challenge him for me. Not enough to break the rules for my sake. Not enough..” I said, and he bowed his head.

“I did not want a war. I did not want our love to be built on war. I wanted to do it amicably. The east is your home, and you have people there. I did not want to ruin the place. I swear, Tamia. I just wanted to do it amicably. I did not know Sylvester would take you away and that you would end up with him,” he said, and I smiled with hurt in my heart.

“We do not know what the future holds, Devin; that is why we seize the moment and do all we can. Love the people we love, appreciate them, tell them, and show them how we feel. Do all that we want for them because the future isn’t guaranteed. Tomorrow isn’t guaranteed. So we become a bit impulsive, so we don’t look back on it with regrets. Things change, feelings, time, and conditions; they all change, so we always seize the moment and live

in it because tomorrow isn't guaranteed. I know this and live by it daily, which you should have. If you had, we would be together. I wouldn't have met Sylvester, known him, and fallen in love with him. I wouldn't be torn and fighting our bond right now; my heart and yours wouldn't be breaking. Everything would be as it should be," I said and looked at the sky.

"When Leo found Amanda, I ran away from the party and shifted. The pain was incredible, and I prayed that my mate would come and take it away. The goddess answered, she answered, but when you came, you weren't willing. You weren't ready, so I had to face it alone, and someone else had to help me through the healing process. What you feel for me is a bond ordained by the goddess and fate; what I have with Sylvester is destiny made from choice," I said, and his eyes widened.

"I love him, Devin. My heart beats for him. He was there. He held my hand to make me smile, gave me a reason to try again, fixed me, and made me hope and love again. He was there. Now you hold a rose in your hand and want me to just forget about the one person who loved me through my pain and suffering. The one person that went against tradition, his values, his family, his people, for my sake. The one person willing to seize the moment and live in it." I said and looked at him.

"I can't. I promised him I would be home tomorrow. I promised him I would never leave him. I promised I wouldn't break his heart. I am not letting you go because of my promises; I am letting you go because I have already given my heart to him," I said, and he nodded, tears streaming down his face.

"When Leo told me you were in love with Sylvester Volkov, I thought it was a lie. When I heard of your marriage, I thought you only did it to survive. But seeing you here made me realise I was wrong. He let you come this far unaccompanied, and you're not willing to come with me. I see you love him," He said and bowed his head.

"And I know the bond can not take that away. The human and the wolf would always be conflicted. Leo loved you, still loves you, and because of that, he hasn't been able to be happy with Amanda. I see him die more every time, and I do not wish that on you, Tamia. I do not want to be the source of your pain. You were right when you said I had lost my opportunity. Even if I take you and claim you, just like Leo, your heart will always beat for Sylvester. I can see it in your eyes. I care about you enough to want you to be truly happy. I do not want my love or our bond to be a source of pain and regret for you.

Whatever you do, I will accept and wish you the best," He said, letting the rose drop into his hand.

I looked at him and did not know what to do.

A part of me wanted to reject him and walk away.

Another told me to consider it. I wasn't fated to Sylvester; what if he finds his fate and betrays me? Then I will be left with nothing.

If I let Devin go, I might never have a fated again. Second-chance mates are rare. I looked at him, and my heart thumped in my chest.

He pulled me close to him and began to kiss me again, Pleading his case.

He was trying to influence my decision with my body, and my body let him.

I could understand what Leo went through that night.

My mind was trying to seize control, but my wolf and body wanted him. Musk and wood scent engulfed me, and a light moan escaped my lips. He pulled me to his body, and I wrapped my arms around him.

"Mate," I heard myself say, and he growled. My body was shaking in his arms.

He travelled with his kiss to my neck. Licking and sucking the skin. My vision was a blur; he was erupting desire in me, none like I had felt before. Intoxicating.

I knew I shouldn't be doing this, but I could no longer remember why.

Our kiss became more hungry and vicious, and he took full possession of my body and laid me on the grass.

"Mine," He said, and just like that, I snapped out of my trans and moved away from under him. He stared at me in disbelief, and I moved backwards, staring at him in disbelief.

Knight's voice echoed in my head.

"Mine," He said, and I felt my claws and teeth retract. Realising what had happened, he did the same.

Not wanting him to claim me, I decided to do the only thing I could.

“I Tamia Riverstorm..” I started, and he bowed in shame, kneeling in the grass.

“Reject you, Devin Corrigan, as my fated mate. I pray the goddess blesses you with one worthy to be yours and you have the wisdom to seize the moment,” I said, and he accepted in tears and heartache.

We waited for the wrenching pain that accompanies a rejection, but it never came.

I looked at myself and then at him for the pain and weakness, but it did not come.

He looked at me, surprised.

His scent was no longer intoxicating, which meant the bond was no more, but there was no pain or weakness.

We sat on the grass looking at each other, waiting for the pain to come, but it never did.

~Tamia~

This was unheard of.

We sat on the grass for thirty minutes, and nothing.

“Do you feel anything? Is your wolf weak?” I asked, and he shook his head.

“Wow,” I said, and he chuckled lightly.

“Sylvester is lucky to have you,” he confessed, and I bowed my head.

“You were right, Tamia. I should have seized that moment, but I didn’t. It is my loss,” he said, and I smiled at him.

“I know you will find someone that will love you genuinely, Devin, but please stop fighting Sylvester. He isn’t a bad guy,” I said, and he laughed.

“It’s funny you ask me not to fight the guy you rejected me for,” he said, and I knew I sounded a bit stupid.

“But I understand. Because there was no love between us, all my longing for you is gone, and I am sure the same for you. I guess the bond is only a guide to help us build a relationship and fall in love, hence why Leo has been unable to get over you,” he said and touched my hand and kissed it gently.

“I liked you from the moment I saw you, and I still do. I won’t attack Sylvester because of you, Tamia, but if he looks for my trouble, I will give it to him,” He said, and I could feel pain and heartbreak in his eyes, even though he was trying to hide it.

“You will find someone worthy,” I said to him, and he nodded and stood up.

“I doubt she will be anything like you, Tamia. You are one of a kind,” He said, and I smiled.

He stretched his hands and helped me stand up. Then pulled me close and kissed me. I let him, and he broke the kiss.

“I will remember this, Tamia and I will always seize my moment so I do not lose out. If he ever hurts you, you can call on me, Tamia,” He said and caressed my cheek longingly.

“I will always answer you whenever you call me. I promise you. I do not know why this rejection did not hurt or weaken us, but I am glad that other than the heartache, we did not lose much,” he said, and I kissed his palm, hoping I hadn’t made a mistake and condemned myself for nothing.

He held my hand, and I could see he was reluctant to let go.

“Bond aside, just like Sylvester, I too would have fallen in love with you, and maybe I had a little bit that night,” He said.

We both chuckled lightly.

He patted my cheek and left me in the gardens, and as he walked away, my heart was overcome with fear. Fear of the unknown. This was my chance to be with my fated, and I had thrown it away. I prayed to the goddess that I had not made a wrong choice and that this would not end up hurting me.

I returned to the party and sat on the high table next to Avery.

“Goddess, Tamia, you looked ravaged,” She said, and I felt tears wanting to fall.

I felt I had wronged Sylvester and cheated on him by letting Devin kiss me and touch me. Tears began to fall, and Avery quickly made them excuse us, so they wouldn't see my tears.

We returned to the room, and I began to cry.

“What happened? You reek of someone else, Tamia. What did you do? Were you attacked?” she asked, and I shook my head.

“I found my fated tonight,” I told her, and she gasped.

“Fuck!!!” she yelled and sat beside me.

“Fuck fuck fuck!!!” She exclaimed.

“I let him kiss me; he almost claimed me, and I liked it,” I said, crying. She held me.

“This is not good for you and Sylvester, Tamia,” she said, and I shook my head.

“I rejected him, and he accepted, but I still feel like shit. I feel like I have cheated on Sylvester,” I said, and she hugged me.

“You have done the bravest thing that no alpha has been able to do. I am sure a kiss will be better than running off with your fated. Besides, nothing happened between you two; it was just a kiss. Wash his scent off your body and forget about it. You don't have to tell Sylvester about it if a reason doesn't exist. Telling him about it means that it meant something, and from how you are behaving, I know it meant nothing, so let it go,” she said, and I nodded.

“Who was it?” She asked me, and I looked at her.

“Devin Corrigan,” I said, and her eyes looked like they were going to pop out of the sockets.

“No way!” she exclaimed, and I nodded.

“That explains a lot. The way he behaved at the dinner was weird. You couldn’t sense him because of Leo’s mark,” She said, then stood up and began to pace.

“No wonder he attacked the Volkov estate for you. No wonder people were asking if anything was between you two. Why didn’t he claim you as his at the party?” She asked the same question that I asked him.

“He said he wanted the moment to be perfect,” I said, and she chuckled.

“His loss. Did the man ever hear of the saying Seize the Moment?” she said, and I did not know what to say.

“I guess not,” she concluded.

“Look, darling, dust yourself and move on,” She said, and I nodded,

“What if Sylvester finds his fated and makes me share?” I asked her, and she realised what was truly troubling me.

“I am sure you did not sacrifice for the wrong man, but if that ever happens, I know you are strong to handle it,” She said and came to sit with me and rub my hand gently.

“I do not think you should worry about things like that. All we can know is the moment, and we must live in it. Tomorrow is beyond our control. Let it take care of itself,” she said and lifted my chin gently.

“Today and now, Sylvester loves you; I doubt anything will ever change that,” She said and kissed the top of my head.

“Come on, we need to shower and pack our bags. I want to see my man tomorrow morning, and you need Sylvester’s comfort, after which you will have to see the doctor because you do not seem fine,” she said, and I laughed a bit.

She led me to the shower, and I had a warm bath, after which food was brought to our room by Iris, and we thanked her for her kindness.

Alpha Jake came to check on us, and Avery told him my illness had worsened, and I needed to rest.

We also told him we would like to leave as early as five in the morning.

He thanked us for staying and attending the festival and hoped we would see each other soon.

I assured him the party would not be far, and he promised to attend.

I was restless most of the night, and it took a while before sleep came.

Contrary to what we said would happen, we woke around six in the morning, and I was too sick to do much.

I wondered if it was the rejection that made my sickness worse.

Denis drove us to Gad, where we got into the jet to return to the north.

I heaved most of the time in the car, and my skin was burning.

I wanted to know if Devin was affected too, but somehow I doubted it. I believe it was mainly because of my sickness.

The flight felt like forever, and when we landed in the north, Kappa Wilson, whom I did not like much for slapping me when they brought us to the north, was there to receive us.

He saluted us and treated us with the utmost respect.

I thought he would want to slap me again, and I wanted to tease him about it, but my physical health and sadness did not let me tease him.

We arrived at the estate, and I was eager to see Sylvester, but none of them was home; neither he nor Marcel nor Theodore.

Linda came to receive us, and we went to my room. By then, it was evident that I was ill.

“What happened to her?” I heard Linda ask Avery while she used a cold towel to bring down my temperature.

“She was sick before we left, but it took a turn for the worse last night,” Avery said, and Linda was worried.

“Please, get better because Stephanie is back, and she is a terrible bitch now. She has taken over the estate, and Sylvester does not even care,” she said, and I heaved.

I was in no physical condition to banter with anyone.

“Call Sylvester on the phone, tell him to send a doctor,” Avery ordered Linda, and Linda took out her phone and placed a call to Sylvester. It seemed like he did not pick so she called another number.

“Darling,” She said, and I knew it was Theodore.

“Avery and Tamia are back. Please tell alpha to send a doctor; Tamia isn’t feeling well,” She said, and he said something and hung up.

“Sylvester is in a meeting, so he said he would send a doctor instead and tell Sylvester once he is through with the meeting.

“He should tell him now. She needs him,” Avery yelled at Linda, and Linda shook, wondering why the urgency.

She called back and insisted that he tell Sylvester immediately that it was a serious matter.

“He said okay,” She said, and Avery and Linda led me to the bathroom and made me get into the bathtub filled with cold water.

“I will add ice to it now to crash your temperature; the doctor is on the way,” She said, and I nodded.

I could pick up every scent in the room. It was nauseating.

Soon, the doctor arrived, and I was carried to the room and placed on the bed. Sylvester came immediately and ran to my bedside.

He looked worried and scared.

“What is going on?” he asked, and I could hear the fear in his voice. I wish I could speak, but I was too sick to talk. He kissed my lips, then my cheek and my palm. I heard Knight growl, and I tried to smile so he would be at peace.

“The doctor just arrived. We hope he will tell us,” Avery said, and Sylvester looked at me.

“Tamia, please stay with me,” he said, and I nodded. So he would know I was still awake and okay, just feverish and nauseous.

I touched his hands and squeezed weakly.

He kissed me on the lips and forehead, and the doctor took some blood samples.

“How long has she been feeling this way?” The doctor asked, and Avery was too afraid to say how long in the presence of Sylvester so he would not be pissed, but she had no choice.

“Five days now,” She said, and Sylvester exclaimed.

“She has been throwing up her food and eating much. She has also been burning up.” Avery said, and the doctor nodded.

“Mood swings?” He asked, and Avery could not answer.

“I will need a sample of her urine for a quick test,” he said, and Sylvester carried me to the toilet to pee into a cup so it could be used.

He was gentle and handled me with care. I knew he was afraid and was only trying to be strong.

I managed to pee, and he carried me back to bed.

He returned to the toilet to get my urine sample for the doctor.

I noticed the doctor put a strip in the cup and took it out.

He held the strip in his hands and waited, and soon the confusion in his eyes turned into a broad smile.

He looked at Sylvester and smiled,

“Congratulations, my Lord. Lady Tamia is pregnant”

~Sylvester~

When Theodore interrupted my speech at the northern council conference, I knew something serious had happened.

I politely excused myself. I went to him.

I could hear people murmuring, but soon, Marcel took over, and they were silent.

That was why it was best I wrote my speeches. He just picked up from where I left off.

Theodore stood when I approached him.

“They are back,” He said, and I smiled, glad that Tamia had returned.

I was worried she might see Leo or Devin, and they would convince her to leave with them.

The painful part of that fear was that I wouldn’t have gone after her if she had willingly followed. Otherwise, I would have given my mother, Dominic and the entire council the war they had longed for and burned the south or east to the ground.

“Tamia is ill. Linda asked that I send a doctor, which I did, but then she insisted I tell you. I think it is serious,” He said, and images of her being poisoned by Jake Brighton just to get at me flooded my mind.

I was out the door before Theodore could finish the sentence.

People were looking at me weirdly.

The moment I stepped out, I hopped into the first car I saw. It wasn’t mine, but I was lord, and the driver was already behind the wheel.

“Volkov estate now!” I ordered him, and he started his vehicle.

I did not know who he worked for; I will have to apologise later.

We arrived at the estate, and I rushed into the building and went straight to my room.

Avery and Linda were with her. She looked pale and sweaty but seemed a bit calm. The doctor was examining her, and I went to hold her hands. Knight was afraid, so I had to try and control myself.

When the doctor congratulated me that she was pregnant, I was shocked. Knowing that Linda did not feel the same way made me still worried that Jake did something.

“Linda is pregnant, and she isn’t ill?” I asked the doctor.

“People experience pregnancy differently, but I will still take her blood sample to test for other things. If there is anything, she is already recovering from it. I will give her a mild sedative to help her relax and sleep it off, but there is no cause for alarm here. She will be alright when she wakes up; she just needs to rest,” he said, administered the sedative, and packed his things to leave.

I watched Tamia’s eyes close gradually until she fell asleep.

Linda and Avery excused themselves, and I stayed with her.

There was a knock on my door thirty minutes later, and I rushed to open it so the person did not bang too hard and wake Tamia up. I knew it was my mother. She was the only one that dared to do that.

I opened the door, and she frowned at me. Not wanting her in my room, I stepped outside.

“What is wrong with her?” She asked, and I knew she must have heard.

“What do you care?” I said, and she sighed and bowed her head.

“I know I misbehaved the last time, and I am sorry. It was just that treason is a serious crime, and I knew they would want to kill Dominic. Tamia threatened to deal with Dominic if he caused you trouble. You are a fool for her. I was angry, but I don’t hate her. I just went to my family home to calm down and think things through.” She said, and I knew she was being honest, but Tamia wasn’t comfortable with her anymore, and that was a relationship she would have to fix alone.

“Your words and actions hurt her, mother. Even though she didn’t say it, I could see it. You called her a whore, among other things; words like that don’t get forgotten,” I said, and she bowed.

“Do you know she was the only one that believed Dominic didn’t do it? She was the one that urged me to dig instead of passing judgment. Dominic has been a problem for me, so it was easy to think he would pull off that stunt. It was Tamia that made me question the enforcer. She was the one that made me look at other factors, yet you were busy antagonising her and making her feel inadequate. I am disappointed in you, mother. Anyone looking from the outside would say you didn’t birth me with how you acted. You always side

with him over me; you never have my back,” I said, tears streaming down her face.

“Do not say that, Sylvester. I gave birth to both of you. I threatened to disown him if he went for the hearing. That was why he stayed. I also say hurtful things to Dominic, but I have to feel sorry for him. He is the older of you two, yet he has nothing, no position, no charge and respect. Things like that get to people. You have it all, Sylvester; he has nothing. He has to live in your shadow for the rest of his life. It is not your fault, but I know it gets to him, so he is always eager to prove that you are flawed so he can feel better. Larry has worked on his insecurities and used them. I was happy you locked the douchebag up. I gave birth to both of you. Do not ever think otherwise,” She said and bowed her head.

“I am sorry about Tamia, but I am really concerned for her. I knew she went to the west because of you. It was a brave thing to do on her part, and I commend her, but I am concerned. Jake isn't vindictive, but I can't say the same for Donald Brighton. He is the next alpha, and he has a grudge against this family. Just like Devin, his mother was taken by your father,” she said and looked around us.

I realised she wanted to tell me other things people weren't supposed to hear, so I opened the door to my room and let her in.

I signalled her to keep it down, and she looked at Tamia, where she was sleeping.

“She is pale,” She said with concern, and I nodded.

“Doctor said she will be fine,” I said, and she looked at me.

“Do you mind if I examine her?” She asked, and I did not know how Tamia would feel about it, but since I was there, I decided it wouldn't be any harm.

She touched Tamia's forehead and palm and checked her nails; Tamia stirred in her sleep but did not wake up.

“Did the doctor take a blood sample?” She asked, and I nodded.

“I think she ingested a small amount of poison, and I also think she is pregnant,” she said, and I was panicked because she could be right.

“No need for alarm; her system is fighting whatever was introduced into it,” She said and patted her hair gently.

“She is pregnant,” I confirmed, and she gasped. A wide grin spread across her face.

“Congratulations,” she said softly and looked at Tamia lovingly.

“I hope she will give me another chance.” She said, and I doubted Tamia would be that nice again, but I kept it to myself.

“You were going to tell me something about Donald Brighton, mother,” I said, and she nodded. We moved to the couch area, and she sat.

“Yes, Ava Brighton. A bitch ...” she said scornfully.

“She and Gretchen were brought as trophies. Gretchen was Jake’s younger sister. She was stunning and a looker. Your father eagerly drafted her to join his harem and reluctantly drafted Ava. He favoured Gretchen of all his bedmates, and Ava got jealous. Gretchen thought she was being nice when she pleaded with Maurice to send her sister In-law back to her husband, and Maurice considered it. I hated that bitch because she almost took my husband from me. Ava did not see it as an act of kindness on her part. She saw it as a way of reducing her competition. The bitch thought Maurice liked her too, and Gretchen was only trying to get rid of her. So she pleaded with Maurice to remain in his service and continue to warm his bed,” She said and wiped away her tears.

It was clear that my mother’s selective memory was her coping mechanism.

Sometimes she would say he had to sleep with those women to learn their husband’s secrets and be ahead of them, but here she was admitting that his method was fucked up, but I held my tongue.

“Ava murdered Gretchen in cold blood, driving a silver blade through her heart in this room,” she said, looking around.

“She had come to plead with Maurice to let her say, and instead of finding Maurice, she found Gretchen in his bed naked, looking freshly fucked, and she snapped. You see, Maurice had stopped touching Ava, and it bothered her,” she said and bowed her head.

“Maurice had her locked up in the dungeon, and one drunken night, he went to her cell and took her life,” she said, and I was stunned.

“What he did was against the law. Ava was supposed to stand trial for her crime, slave or not. But he acted on impulse, and we swept it under the carpet. No one knew this, but Donald hates the Volkovs because of it. He thinks his mother was brought here as a slave and killed unjustly. I doubt Jake knows the truth,” She said, and I looked at Tamia.

“Our family has many enemies, hence why the rest of the Volkov bloodline are quiet and not bearing our last name. It was wrong to send her to Brighton. I am sure they wanted to kill her. She just didn’t ingest enough,” she said, and I hoped for Jake’s sake there was nothing in Tamia’s blood or I would destroy Brighton.

“Is there a record of this?” I asked her, and she nodded.

” The recordkeeper kept a record,” She told me, and I nodded, hoping to use it when the time comes.

“The council have sent enforcers for Dominic’s hearing. They want to move him and Bryce to the council prison,” Theodore said through the mind link, and I got up immediately.

“What is the matter, son?” My mother asked, and I shook my head. I dared not tell her what was happening.

“Council matters,” I said, and she nodded.

“I will take my leave. Tamia likes yoghurt and fruits. She also likes smoked salmon in her salad. I will have the kitchen staff prepare her favourite so she can eat when she wakes up; she has lost some weight.” My mother said, and I thanked her.

We both left the room.

Although I knew she meant no harm, I did not want her to be the first person Tamia would see when she woke up.

I linked Avery and Linda to go to my room and be with Tamia, then headed to the dungeons where the enforcers were waiting.

Marcel was there, and Dominic stood in chains with fear in his eyes.

“What is the meaning of this?” I asked, and the leader bowed his head.

“Your Eminence, Councilwoman Pamela asked us to transfer the suspects to the council prison so they can stand trial tomorrow,” He said, and I nodded.

“They will stand trial tomorrow; tell her I will be presiding over the case, and the prisoners will remain in my custody until then. Now leave,” I said. I knew it wasn’t my place, but I was going to bend the rules for Dominic’s sake. Someone wanted him to be the fall guy, and I wasn’t going to allow it.

“With all due respect, my lord, the council decides on criminal matters,” he said, and I nodded.

“Then tell them I am overriding the decision this time. If they have an issue, they should face me directly on the matter,” I said, and the man nodded, saluted me with respect and left.

“What is with the council? Why are they quick and eager to convict Dominic,” Marcel said, and I looked at my brother.

“Someone is desperate to cover their tracks by making him the fall guy,” I said, and there was hope in Dominic’s eyes.

“What?” Marcel said.

“Tamia and I have been digging, and we found some really troubling things. They were hoping I wouldn’t investigate because of the friction between Dominic and me. They were right, had Tamia not insisted, I would have let them deal with him,” I said and looked at Dominic, who looked ashamed of himself.

“You did this to yourself, big brother. Always working against me and trying to prove that I am incompetent. You would have been the fall guy for nothing.” I said, and he remained ashamed.

“Double Bryce and Dominic’s security. I do not want a mishap,” I linked Marcel and Theodore, and they nodded.

I returned to my room to be with Tamia.

~Tamia~

Everyone was elated by the news except for Sylvester. I could see he was happy, but he squeezed my hand gently.

“Thank you, doctor, but why is she ill? Linda is pregnant, and she isn’t ill,” He said, and I could understand his reaction to the news.

“People experience pregnancy differently, but I will still take her blood sample to test for other things. If there is anything, she is already recovering from it. I will give her a mild sedative to help her relax and sleep it off, but there is no cause for alarm here. She will be alright when she wakes up; she just needs to rest,” He said.

“I will administer a mild sedative to help her rest”, he added.

The doctor administered the medication and left. Leaving Sylvester, Avery and me in the bedroom.

My eyes became heavy, and I fell asleep.

I woke up to see Sylvester lying beside me in bed and working on his computer. I groaned, and he looked at me and smiled.

He put his computer on the nightstand and kissed my forehead.

“If you were a child, I would have said you were grounded,” He said with a tinge of anger, and I understood.

His eyes were teary, and he was fighting his emotions.

“Anything could have happened to you out there, Tamia. Anything. Why would you keep something so significant from me?” He asked, and I gradually sat up.

“Had I told you I was throwing up and feeling feverish, you would not have allowed me to go, and I did not trust the council to do your bidding in the west,” I said, and he bowed his head and then looked at me.

“How are you feeling now?” He asked and placed his hand gently on my belly.

His touch felt good against my skin, and I wanted his hand to linger.

Kaira was silent because she was ashamed of what we did and what she almost allowed to happen. I understood her shame.

“Don’t do this again. Always tell me what you are going through, Tamia. We will get through it together no matter how terrible it is,” He said, and I nodded.

“So we will be parents soon,” he said with a broad grin, and I smiled at him.

I felt like shit.

How would I tell him I saw Devin and we made out? How would I tell him he was my fated, but I rejected him? How?

“Please don’t,” Kaira pleaded with me, afraid.

I understood her fear because making out with Devin and almost allowing him to claim us felt like a great betrayal.

“How were things over there?” he asked, and I told him everything Alpha Jake told me about the attack.

He took off his shirt and snuggled into bed beside me to hold me.

I felt at peace when he wrapped his arms around me and enveloped me with his scent. I held him resting my head on his chest, and looked up at him.

“I love you, Sylvester. Please don’t break my heart,” I said in tears, and he frowned. He was surprised at my sudden mood.

“I can never hurt you, Tamia,” He said and placed my hand on his chest to feel his heartbeat.

“I cannot live without you.” He said.

“If your fated shows up, what would you do?” I asked, and he sat up gently. I gently sat up, too, and he looked at me.

“I make my destiny, Tamia, and I choose you and our baby. She would have shown up late. I have given everything to you, Tamia; I have nothing to give her,” he said, and I bowed my head, knowing how strong the pull was and how Leo failed.

Devin was a gentleman, unlike Amanda, who was persistent. Devin respects my wishes; what if his fated is like Amanda, persistent?

“What if the pull is so strong and you can’t say no?” I asked him, tears streaming down my face.

“I will prove that my love is stronger than the legendary pull of the mate bond. I will choose you over and over again. You have nothing to worry about. Soon we will be married and welcome our baby into the world. My fated has no room in my life,” he said with conviction.

“Your mother hates me, Sylvester. What if she interferes?” I said, and he shook his head.

“My mother doesn’t hate you, and she can never make me do anything I do not want to do,” He said and lifted my hand and kissed it.

“This is it,” he said, pulling me close to kiss him.

His lips felt so good on mine, and I opened up to receive the goodness he was giving. Erasing Devin’s kiss.

I kissed him hungrily, wanting to feel every bit of him, knowing this was it for me.

My heart was beating fast. A mixture of joy and uncertainty.

He travelled with his lips to my neck and sucked.

I wanted him to sink his teeth in and seal the deal.

I wanted to disregard tradition and just go for it. I held his head tightly, and he growled and groaned. He was fighting Knight, and I did not want him to.

Kaira gave me strength, and I straddled him and opened my robe.

He went for my breasts with his lips, and I looked up, pushing my chest to give him access.

He worshipped them and paid attention. I felt his bulge, and I wanted him to seal the deal.

He gently flipped our positions and got off the bed, leaving me gasping for air and disappointed.

“You need to rest, Tamia. I want you so badly that if I go ahead now, I will claim you,” He confessed, and I took off my robe completely.

“I do not care, Sylvester. I am already yours,” I said, and his eyes went completely dark.

He had entered a battle he would lose because Knight charged back to the bed and kissed me hungrily; he moved down my body fast and went between my legs.

“Mine,” he growled his famous words.

The words that brought me back from the trance.

The words that helped me keep my promise and gave me control.

I welcomed the words and opened wider for him.

He teased my knob with his tongue and then looked at me to be sure I was seeing what he was doing. He sucked gently, and I moaned. He looked at me again.

“I won’t be able to control myself,” He told me, and I shook my head.

“Then don’t,” I said, and he knelt between my legs and drove his cock into me.

He growled and began to pump fast and hard.

I welcomed it, but a part of me said I was wrong.

He should know...

He should know, and just like that, my body went cold, and I began to cry.

Sylvester gently pulled out and lifted my face to look at him.

“What is the matter, green eyes?” He said with concern, and my tears fell freely.

“I did something bad, Sylvester, and I am afraid you will hate me for it,” I said, and he froze.

“What did you do, Tamia?” He asked gently. I knew he was controlling himself.

He stood up from the bed, and I looked at him, afraid.

“What happened?” He said, and my tears fell freely.

“I...I...I...,” I said, stuttering between sobs.

“I saw Devin at the festival,” I said. He clenched his fists, and his hands began to shake. His eyes darkened instantly, and I could see anger rise in them. There was no going back from this.

“He was my Fated,” I said, and Knight began to growl. I could feel the pressure of his presence.

“I did not know until last night, Sylvester. I swear. I did not know. He said it was because of Leo’s mark,” I said, rushing through the words, but his growls became louder.

“The pull was strong and intoxicating, and we made out,” I confessed, and he roared. I wiped away my tears.

“He almost claimed me, but I rejected him. I rejected him. It took a lot of effort, but I rejected him,” I said and looked at him.

“I had nothing to give him. He accepted because he realised that my heart belonged to you. It was hard, but he accepted it.” I said and began to weep.

He approached me on the bed, and my heart was pounding from fear. I thought he would do something crazy, but he hugged me tightly and kissed my neck.

“It’s okay, darling. It’s okay. You didn’t do anything wrong. You did not betray me. You did something most people are incapable of; you honoured me and kept your promise,” He said and sucked the soft spot of my neck.

“You have nothing to be ashamed of. You and Kaira have nothing to be ashamed of,” he said, looking at me with his black wolf eyes.

“Thank you, Tamia, thank you for coming back to me,” he said, tears streaming down his face. He was afraid.

“Your sacrifice will not be in vain, Tamia. I promise I will never do anything to make you regret choosing me instead of your fated. I promise you.” He said, and I nodded; tears of fear and uncertainty streamed down my face, and he hugged me and kissed my neck.

“I am yours, Tamia. My heart, body and soul. You will never have to share me with anyone. I will never hurt or betray you. I will never touch anyone else until I die. It will only be you now and always. Just you, Tamia and no one else. I love you,” he said and arrested my lips with his.

He laid me down gently on the bed and gradually used his tongue to leave a trail of pleasure on my skin. Tracing from my neck to my core. He sucked on my mound gently, and all the fear I felt was replaced with pleasure; the load was lifted, and I felt light.

I came immediately, and he placed himself in me and pumped. His eyes were dark, and Kaira took over.

He pumped and pumped, and I came several times. Even though we weren't fated, I hoped this was it.

We lay in the bed naked, and Sylvester cracked many jokes about what his mother did when she returned.

According to him, she was hurt he didn't come after her. She wanted to go missing, and he would come and beg her, and then she will make her demands as her condition to return. When that didn't happen, she returned and accused him of abandoning her and choosing me over her. The woman was just unbelievably petty. Sylvester wanted me to forgive her, but I bore no grudge against her, to begin with. I had just decided that I would be careful around her.

Stephanie had said hurtful and mean things to me. It wasn't okay. It wasn't okay for her to switch and insult my friends and me because she was hurt. It wasn't okay.

I could understand Sylvester's willingness to forgive her; she was his mother, but I couldn't.

After what Jake had told me, I planned on investigating her too.

I knew the woman was hiding something and was determined to find it out.

“Dominic and Bryce will be tried tomorrow. Do you think you can join me?” He asked, and I searched his eyes.

“With Stephanie around?” I asked him, and he laughed.

“She won’t trouble you. She knows what you did for Dominic..” He said, and I interrupted him.

“I didn’t do it for her. I did it for you and the love of truth. She shouldn’t get it twisted. The things she said to me still hunts me. Calling me and my friends social climbers and eastern whores..” I said, and Sylvester touched my hand and kissed it.

“You aren’t any of those things..” he said, and I nodded.

“I know I am none of those things, Sylvester, but it isn’t alright that she calls us names. It isn’t easy being here. If it weren’t for the love we found with you, Marcel and Theodore, Avery, Linda and me would not have it easy mentally. It isn’t okay,” I said, and he pulled me close.

“I am sorry about the condition in which you were brought here, Tamia. I will never take prisoners again. It is a tradition that I am ready to abolish, but I will want you with me tomorrow,” He said, and I nodded.

“With pleasure,” I said, and we both smiled.

I knew the trial would be tedious because I suspected the culprit of being in the council. If not, the entire panel and Vino was too weak and scared to do their job.

~Tamia~

“That went well,” Kaira said, purring in my head as Sylvester walked to the bathroom naked.

I stared at his chiselled body, and it made me groan. How could someone be carved so perfectly? Tight butt cheeks, define calves. His muscles flexed, and his tattoo was masterfully done.

“How did we end up with such a hottie?” Kaira said, and I had to shut my horny wolf up because Leo was hot too but not this hot.

Kaira was a complete contrast from a few hours ago when she was panicking about our make-out session with Devin.

I wondered how Devin was doing and if he had indeed moved on. I hoped so because the last thing I wanted was for him to feel cheated.

“Come over,” I heard Sylvester in my head, and I left the bed naked and went into the bathroom. He laid in the tub with water and asked me to sit between his legs so he could wash me.

I got in with him, and he kissed my shoulder, which made me moan. He lathered the sponge and began to wash my skin. I knew I was being pampered, so I relished the moment. Taking everything in and letting him spoil me.

Morning came, and we had our breakfast together.

Everyone congratulated me, and I noticed Avery was a bit affected by it. She was happy for me, but she was sad for herself.

I touched her hand lightly to encourage her, and she knew that I knew.

Soon we left the place and got ready to go to the council hall.

Stephanie approached us on our way out, and I was a bit uncomfortable.

I did not know what to tell her, but I chose to be civil for Sylvester’s sake.

“Good morning, dear Tamia,” she said, and I smiled at her in response.

“Congratulations. Thanks to you I will soon be a grandma,” She said, looking genuinely happy, and I smiled at her, not wanting to say anything.

She touched my hand and patted it lightly.

” We should talk when you return,” she said gently with pleading eyes. I did not want to be alone in a room with her, but I knew Sylvester won’t see anything wrong with it, so I nodded.

“As long as the conversation does not include my doom and slurs, I will make room,” I said, and Sylvester chuckled.

She pulled me into a hug.

"I am sorry for all the hurtful things I said to you," She said. Because she didn't strike me as the type to eat her words, I was wary of her apology, but I accepted it for Sylvester's sake. I did not want him to feel torn between his mother and me, but I had questions for her and hoped she would be truthful enough to answer them.

We walked away, and a vehicle was waiting for us.

Usually, Sylvester used his jeep; I wondered why he opted to have a driver drive us in a car. We got into the backseat, and he held me.

"A car?" I said, and he nodded.

"No one drives my jeep, and I want to hold you all through," He said and kissed my neck.

"I still can't believe you rejected your fated for me. You have proven to me that true love exists," he said, and I looked at him and searched his eyes. The driver started the vehicle and moved.

"I was scared you would be mad," I confessed, and he shook his head.

"I wasn't growling from anger, green eyes; I was growling from fear. Ever since the attack on the northern gates, I have feared that Devin would take you from me. What you told me has now put my mind at peace," He said and touched my belly lightly.

"I want to claim you so badly, and I doubt I can wait until the blue moon. If I did not need the blue moon for it to work, I would have done it last night. I want us to be connected on all levels, Tamia; I want you inside me. I want you to share my soul, and I share yours," he said, and we kissed.

We finally arrived at the council hall and went to sit in Sylvester's box. Everyone was there, Avery, Marcel, Theodore and Linda. On the floor at the centre was a broken version of Dominic, a very afraid Bryce and a furious version of Larry.

I knew Larry shouldn't be there, but Sylvester wanted to humiliate the man and make him suffer.

He was justified to do so because the man tried to use Dominic to work against him.

The sooner Dominic realises the enemy is from without, the better.

Vino greeted Sylvester and acknowledged our presence, then handed over to Jacob Mikhailov, the council spokesman.

“I speak on behalf of the council when I say you have overstepped your bounds, my lord,” The man said, and Sylvester was silent.

“Civil and criminal matters are overseen by the council. You have abused your power by holding the prisoners in your custody and choosing to preside over this case. We hereby ask you to withdraw and only observe as we deal with the matters.” He said, and Sylvester raised his hand and signalled the man to be seated.

“Tell me of the council’s investigations and findings first before I respond to your demand,” He said calmly.

Pamela, who I had slowly started to hate, stood up to speak.

“What more is there to know? Enforcer Golubev has confessed the truth. We are here for sentencing,” she said, and I could feel Sylvester’s rage.

“If it was possible to unseat this council, I will. This council has failed woefully in their duty. Was it not this council that accused me of being wicked without investigating the allegation against me? And now you have done the same. Unfortunately, I will decide on this one because my brother is involved. I have done some investigations, and here are my findings. Enforcer Golubev has confessed that he was blackmailed into framing Dominic Volkov. We are in possession of the letter he received from the culprit instructing him to go to the East and cause trouble, and name Dominic as the culprit. In exchange, his pregnant mate will be returned safe and sound.” he said, and people exclaimed.

“We have the letter,” I said, “and I have made copies for you to see.”

“May we see it?” Council Woman Joan Clayman said, and Sylvester nodded.

“What use is this council when it fails to do the needful? I think that there are people actively working against my family and me. And because of this, I will

be presiding over every decision until further notice.” He said, and they began to murmur.

“That is wrong; our family fought for this together. You might be a Royal, but we all share in this...” Pamela said, and Sylvester nodded.

“That is why I have not ordered the arrest of every council member. I hope you all have no hand in this because it is disturbing that you do not investigate and are quick to condemn and destroy what is mine. My brother would have been sentenced and executed for nothing. I want this council to focus on finding the culprit behind this. My Luna and I know that Jenny was the target of the attack that took her life, not my mother; I want this council to spend their precious time figuring out why. I want this council to reduce my workload for me. If I have to get involved with the investigations, I will water down the council’s power. According to the law, I can do it,” he said, and they were all quiet. I noticed some of them look at me scornfully.

“With all due respect, your Eminence, Lunas are not allowed in the council hall, and they are not allowed to preside over matters. Their duty is to make sure the Volkov bloodline always has an heir. You are not married to this woman yet; it will be advisable to keep her out of our business for now,” Joan said, and I knew what they were implying. I always wondered why Stephanie never came; now I know why.

“Well, not in my Epoch,” Sylvester said and stood up.

“How many of you can boast of having Tamia Riverstorm Albert’s achievements added to their belts? She is a strategist, an analyst, a warrior and one of the best investigators in our world. If that does not qualify her to sit in this box, observe, interfere and decide over matters, then I don’t know what would,” he said and sat down.

“I will not repeat myself. Let this be the last time any of you will speak of my Luna as if she is an outsider and an object. I will take it as an insult to my person, and I will not take it easy regardless of your family.” He said and sighed.

I looked at them, and they were silent. Some of them looked at me scornfully, except for Vino, who was smiling at me. I returned his smile, and he nodded.

They read the photocopied letter that Sylvester had passed to them, and they were silent. Then Pamela moved to question Bryce, and he was honest. She asked him if anyone was coerced.

“Are you sure you speak the truth, Enforcer?” She asked him, and Bryce kept his head down.

“I feared they would kill my wife and our unborn child. The instructions were clear. I was to get to the Volkov estate so it would seem like I had a meeting with Lord Dominic. I was to go to the East and state that the council sent me under Lord Volkov’s orders to collect development tax. I was asked to be rude and threaten the head Alpha of the East, and when I was asked who sent me, I was to tell this council it was lord Dominic Volkov. That is the truth,” The man said, and Pamela nodded.

“So, what made you tell the truth?” She asked him.

“My Lord and Lady interrogated me in the council prison and figured out I was lying. I had to give up the pretence and tell the truth,” he confessed, and Pamela shook her head.

“Are you sure you were not coerced by Lady Tamia?” She asked, and I would have slapped her if I had been close to her. Suddenly I began to feel the woman loathed me. I wondered what I did to these people.

She was now high on my investigation list. She better be clean, or I would disgrace her and make sure she loses her seat. I will make an example of the bitch. I was pissed off.

I felt Sylvester’s hand on my thighs, and he touched it gently and smiled at me.

“Calm down, green eyes,” he pleaded with me, and I nodded.

“I wasn’t threatened or coerced by my Lady.” Enforcer Bryce said, and the woman kept quiet. I thought she would dare to ask if Sylvester coerced him, but she didn’t. The bitch.

“Very well then, I doubt there is any need for a trail,” Vino said, and people were silent.

"I hereby acquit Dominic Volkov of all the allegations made against him. I also acquit Councilman Larry McMillian Babanins of the suspicion of conniving with Dominic to commit treason." Vino said, and I remembered the Babanins as one of the families that Maurice took out, according to Jake Brighton. I kept a mental note of it.

Some enforcers went to release Dominic and Larry from the chains. Dominic walked away with his head bowed, feeling ashamed. Likewise Larry, but I noticed something while they walked; Dominic kept his distance from Larry. Locked up for a few days, death looming over his head made Dominic rethink certain things.

Soon I saw Dominic come to join us in our box. I was uncomfortable, but he was Sylvester's brother.

"Enforcer Bryce Golubev, you have lied against royalty. You committed an offence that would have cost the man his life. You also misled this council, which is an act of treason. As a result, we sentence you to death by beheading." Vino pronounced with a tinge of anger, and I squeezed Sylvester's lap.

"Do not let them kill him. This will not be the end of people plotting against you. The next person will never tell the truth if Bryce loses his life," I said quickly, and Sylvester stopped the enforcers from taking Bryce away.

"No one is going to die by beheading," Sylvester said comfortably, and Dominic growled. I could understand Dominic's anger, but Bryce had no choice.

"He spoke up and told the truth. He could have also maintained his lie, which would have saved him from punishment. But he told the truth and, in turn, saved my brother and councilman Larry from being

sentenced for treason. As a result, I pardon him and move him to work at the Volkov estate. I would rather surround myself with honest people than connivers," Sylvester said, and the council murmured.

"The law, your Eminence," Pamela said, and Sylvester shook his head.

"I choose mercy," he said, and the woman looked at me. Her eyes showed she knew I was the one that instigated it. I needed to find a way to clip her

wings before she became a problem for me. As things were, Vino was the only council member who did not hate me.

~Devin~

I decided to attend Jake's festival to unwind. It was a last-minute decision. I planned to spend four days in Brighton and then return to Greenwood. It was a great plan. It was supposed to ease my stress and help me think straight.

When I arrived in Brighton in the evening of the festival and Jake told me that Tamia was around, I was giddy. Rex was overjoyed, and I could not believe how easy it would be to take my mate away from Sylvester. Hearing that Sylvester sent her to have a peace talk with Jake unaccompanied made me think of two different extremes.

Either they loved and trusted each other so much that he would allow her to handle state matters without fear, or her life meant nothing. He was willing to gamble it away by using her to apologise to Jake, hoping Jake won't attack and kill her.

Hearing Jake talk about her made me realise she was alright.

He told me she arrived a bit ill and pale looking, and I was afraid Sylvester maltreated her in the north.

I planned it all.

The rose, the garden. I wanted it to be perfect. I wanted it to be romantic. It is all I have ever wanted. Finding my mate and starting a real life in love and happiness.

Tamia was perfect. I did not care that she was once married or was taken by the wolf lord. I did not care. I just wanted my mate.

Rex hoped to hold her, accept her and claim her. I wasn't going to waste any time.

I was going to run fast and sink my teeth into her.

I did not need to wait for the blue moon; that was only done by chosen mates for the claiming to work.

I did not need the blue moon to claim my mate. The moon goddess had given her to me.

So I used my scent to lure her.

She scented Peach and Wildflowers. Her scent was vivid and more precise than when we first met at the party.

She was delicious, and she was mine. I hoped she would follow, and she did.

When she saw me and tears started streaming down her cheeks, I knew it wouldn't be easy.

Everything she said to me in tears broke my heart. Not because she refused to run into my arms, but because what she was saying was true.

I took my moment with her for granted. I wronged her deeply.

I knew she was hurting with Leo, and I should have challenged him for her hand, but I was diplomatic about it. I made the biggest mistake of my life.

I should have taken her from him that night. I took our moment for granted, and Volkov stole her heart.

I could not blame her for rejecting me. But deep down, she should have given me a chance to prove myself.

No pain or weakness came with the rejection, but the feeling was the same.

I knew she battled her wolf to let me go. As much as I wanted to be persistent, I had to respect her wishes. I lost my chance, and I hated myself for it. Rex did not forgive me for accepting the rejection.

We actually thought she would let us claim her. The feeling was right. It felt so good, and I wanted to sink my teeth into her neck, but she pulled away. I could not force myself on her.

I left Brighton the next day a broken man.

Throughout my journey back to Greenwood, my wolf howled, blaming me for the loss and rejection. He, too, was right.

When I held her in my arms at the party, he urged me to throw away the alliance and challenge Leo for her hand. Her eyes were sad and withdrawn. I should've listened to my wolf, but I didn't.

I wanted the marriage to end naturally because they weren't ready to let each other go, even though Amanda had come between them. I know Leo still feels the same way.

I got home and thought I wouldn't long for her anymore, but I still wanted her. I remembered how it felt to have her in my arms, and I wished things were different and she didn't fall in love with Volkov.

"What will we do now?" Rex asked me, still mourning our loss.

"I do not know, but I think we shouldn't be quick to move on. Tamia does not like to share, and knowing the history of the Volkovs, they always have more than one woman. I plan on waiting a bit to see how things go between them." I told my wolf, and he was silent.

I wasn't going to actively try to separate them, but I was afraid she might lose on his side too. There was no way he could be different from his father. I had to make sure I remained available a little longer for her sake.

"I say we wage war and take her from him. The goddess made her for us. She is ours. He has stolen what is ours," Rex said, and tears streamed down my face.

"She is in love with him, Rex. We can't beat that. The only thing we can do is wait them out. He might slip up, and if he does, I will be there for her, even if it is as a friend, but this can't be it," I said, trying to convince myself there was hope.

My day went slow, and I returned to Greenwood more depressed than I had left.

A day later, I was sitting in my office when Lukman, my beta, brought me an invitation from the Northern Council.

"We hereby invite your pack to partake in our tournament starting next month's new moon. The open competitions are Polo, Swimming, Football, Golf, Croquet, Volleyball, One Hundred Metre Dash and Ring Fight (without any presence of Silver). Please reply with the list of sports you are interested

in and the name of your team members. Thank you, and we look forward to hosting you,” it read, and I looked at the person that sent the invitation.

“From the Northern Council, Signed Joan Clayman. ”

It was strange that the northern council would invite me to participate in the all-region sports games. They usually invite lesser southern Alphas, but they had chosen to invite me this year. I contemplated whether I should accept or not.

“Weirdly, the council would invite us, knowing we have an issue with the lord,” Lukman said. I even had more issues with the Lord because Volkov had stolen the heart of my fated.

“Should we take part in it?” Lukman asked, and I did not know what to say.

Usually, I would say no, but it also meant I would see Tamia one more time before her wedding.

It meant I could officially spend a month in the north without having any hindrances because the tournament takes that long before we complete.

The Polo alone takes two weeks. It would be a great opportunity.

“Do you know if Volkov is participating?” I asked Lukman, and he nodded.

“He plays Polo every year.” He said, and I began to grin from ear to ear.

“Do we have a good Polo team?” I asked him, and he nodded.

“Nikolas Sullivan has a good team. He is a northerner but relocated to the south eleven years ago with his niece. I am sure they would participate in the north as a southern team against Volkov’s team.” He said, and I began to grin because this would be an excellent opportunity to spend time with Tamia.

As much as I hated to think of it, she would be around Sylvester often, and if he played Polo, we would be around each other often.

It will give me a chance.

I need to prove that I am a better man for her. I did not plan on playing dirty, but I planned on making an effort. If I still lose, I would gracefully bow out, but

I would try as penance for not taking her away from Leo when I had the chance.

Somehow I knew it was my fault she ended up in the north. If I had taken her from Leo, the north would have still attacked the east, but she wouldn't be there to give herself up. She would have been with me.

I looked at Lukman, grateful for the opportunity that had dropped on my lap, and I wasn't going to waste it.

"Ask Nikolas Sullivan to see me in my office. I need to finalise with him and respond to the Northern council as soon as possible before the slots for Polo teams are filled." I told Lukman, and he went to sort the matter.

I waited nervously in my office, grateful for the opportunity.

Knowing the invitation came in late because most Alphas received their invites two weeks ago, it seemed like a last-minute thing. I believed I wasn't meant to be invited, but they chose to invite me for reasons known to them.

I felt it was off that the council would invite me, but it might be their step toward making peace with me. After all, Sylvester had sent Tamia to Brighton to make peace with Jake, and he had somehow made peace with Leo.

Leo never spoke scornfully of the Dark Alpha, and I believe he should because the man took his wife, whom he still loves, but Leo seemed to be okay with it. Volkov might have suddenly realised the errors of their ways and wanted to make amends, or this might also be an attempt to keep his enemies close. I did not know what it may be, but I was on alert. If it was a trap, I had to get out of it. If it weren't for my need to see Tamia again and try to prove myself to her, I would have declined.

Nikolas arrived a few hours later, and he had brought his niece. Lukeman had sent a helicopter to pick him up from Pridewood, where they were staying. It wasn't far, but they would have taken longer to get to Greenwood.

The man looked fit and a bit younger than I imagined. He was in his early forties, and I was sure he could swing a mallet with ease. His niece was a pretty blonde woman, roughly twenty-six or twenty-seven. She was very stunning and had that legendary northern beauty.

I stood up to greet them, and they greeted me with a lot of respect. His niece seemed in awe of me and made me feel like a celebrity.

“Please, make yourselves comfortable,” I said, offering them seats, and they sat down.

“To what do we owe this honour, alpha?” Nikolas asked, and I smiled so he would know to relax and that I meant well.

“I heard you have the best Polo team in the south,” I said, and the man smiled, trying to be modest.

“We try alpha, but it isn’t a popular game in the south as it is in the north,” he said, and I nodded.

“I know you relocated here with your niece from the north. I was hoping your team could represent us in the all-region tournament starting next new moon,” I said, and the man was stunned. He could not contain his joy.

“It will be an honour. I have been looking for an opportunity to showcase my teams. It will be great,” The man said, and I looked at his niece, who seemed to be drooling over me, and I smiled at her.

“You play too?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“Yes, she does, but she won’t play at the tournament. She isn’t qualified to play at that level; she will just manage the teams,” The man said, and I had no clue what it entailed, but it sounded like a good thing.

“How many teams would we enter into the competition?” I asked the man.

“Three. We have only three strong teams in the south,” He said, and I nodded.

“Very well then, I will reply and ask them to save three slots for us in the polo tournament. I will need the names of your teams and team members,” I told the man, and he nodded, smiling.

“They will give you a place to rest, and the helicopter will take you back to Pridewood tomorrow,” I said, and the man was excited about it.

I was excited, too, because I had a non-threatening legal reason to be in the north for a whole month. Rex and I were elated, and I relaxed a bit on my couch, hopeful.

~Tamia~

Dominic locked himself in his room for three days after we returned from the council hearing.

I knew it was shame and fear.

Somehow the man did not expect that to happen to him.

I believed realising that he could easily lose his life woke him up.

I wondered how his relationship with Larry would be henceforth.

I knew the council was working against the Volkovs, but we needed to find out who the mastermind was and why, so I decided to start from the beginning.

I went to Sylvester's office, and he was deep in thought, concentrating on the documents on his desk. Realising some people were actively working against him put him on edge.

Initially, it was based on speculation, but now it was apparent.

Whoever threatened Bryce was either the mastermind or part of the clique.

I looked at him and realised he needed a break.

I had to clear my throat for him to realise I had entered his office. It was either he was far away in his mind or so used to my scent that he did not think I had come in. Either way, he looked up and smiled at me.

"Hey," he said, and I smiled and looked at him.

"I want to talk to you, but first, let's go horse riding. I want to go back to the cliff where I can see the alpine," I said, and he smiled at me, but his eyes looked tired.

"How about we do that tomorrow, darling? I am busy. Besides, it would be best if you weren't riding in your condition; I will drive the jeep there. Maybe have a picnic?" he asked, and I laughed.

"But I am allowed to ride you..." I said, and his wolf flashed

“I want us to go now; you need a break, Sylvester. It would help if you unwound so you can think straight. Everyone is going crazy. Marcel and Theodore look like you. Dominic has locked himself inside his room, and your mother is confused. We all need a break, and I want to take it now, with you, at the cliff.” I insisted, and he closed the file on his desk and put it away in a silver safe.

It amazes me how comfortable the northerners were around Silver. They trained with it and used it as storage for essential things. It was mid-bugging. The silver was not in the same space as him but was enclosed in an iron cupboard to prevent it from weakening the people in the room.

Sylvester followed me to the room, and I was glad he listened.

We returned to our bedroom to change our outfits.

“What did you want to tell me other than going to the cliff?” He said, and I smiled at him while I changed into something comfortable.

“I think we should send proper investigators to search Jenny’s house and go through her belongings. Avery, Linda and I can lead it. There are specific things that I am looking for that the people we send might miss, and we are bored sitting doing nothing,” I said, and he was silent; then he went to sit on the bed and started unbuttoning his shirt.

The sight of his bare chest might stop us from making it to the cliff because I was already getting turned on by his stripping gesture alone.

“What are you looking for?” he asked.

“Journals, notes, emails, scribbles, objects...things that can tell a story,” I said, and he took off his shirt, flexing his muscles.

He was so hot that I could no longer concentrate on what I was doing.

I wanted to run my fingers against his chest and feel his muscles. He was mine, all mine, and I wanted him.

“Sylvester,” I asked him, drooling over the sight of his body. He looked at me with a question in his eyes.

“What a hot body you have,” I said to him, and he laughed.

We both laughed; just like that, his spirit was lifted, and his mood was lighter.

“The better to seduce you with, my dear,” He said, and we both laughed because I was playing the role of little red, and he was my big bad wolf.

I could not handle my hormones anymore.

We could talk about Jenny after. But the cliff would have to wait for another day. I went to straddle him on the bed and opened my shirt.

“You need to finish the talk, darling. The wolf desires to eat little red riding hood. Unlike her, I am willing to be devoured,” I said, and he gently touched my tits and sucked them gently in his mouth, swirling his tongue on them.

They were sensitive and hard, and I moaned. I wanted more, something was starving in me, and I needed him to satisfy it.

“I will eat you until you beg me to stop,” he said with a low growl and flipped me unto the bed.

He kissed my neck and nibbled my ears, sucking the lobe and breathing into it. I had goosebumps all over, and my pussy was clenching violently.

“Oh, Sylvester. Please,” I pleaded with him.

My body craved him, aching for his touch, tongue, and cock. My core was aching for release.

He worshipped my body with his mouth and travelled down, sucking and licking my skin, leaving a trail of ecstasy, anticipation, need, desire and want. I dug my nails into the sheet, anticipating him.

“Sylvester,” I moaned, and he kissed my lips but avoided my clit. He was teasing me.

“Ahhh,” I moaned from anticipation and lack of patience.

“I need it now,” I said, trying to press my thighs together to ease the ache.

“Tell me what you want, Tamia,” He growled lowly.

“I want you to eat me until I can take no more, then fuck me until I come all over you,” I said, moaning and writhing under him.

I wasn't a shy woman, and now he knew. I could be vocal when I wanted, and I wanted those things and more.

“Now, Sylvester,” I said, my pussy dripping and anticipating his attention and care.

“Prove to me that you are my big bad wolf,” I said, and he growled and dug in.

He licked my knob and travelled down my slit to my pussy.

“Ahhhhhhhh, Sylvester,” I cried.

I was extra sensitive, and he knew it.

“Do not cum until I tell you to,” He ordered, and I nodded, waiting to see how long I could hold out against his skilful tongue. His skill was unparalleled.

“Sylvester,” I cried, wanting to cum so he could bury himself in me. I wanted to feel his skin against mine. I wanted to wrap myself in his scent.

He worked on me until I could no longer take it.

“Please, Alpha...” I moaned, and he growled with satisfaction.

“Cum,” he linked me.

I released and felt the climax ripple through my veins.

My nerves tingled, and my hair was probably standing.

I felt like my spirit was going to jump out on me, and I stretched, then began to crumble from the over- sensitivity of my clit that he refused to let go of.

Sylvester placed his finger in me, kneaded my walls sweetly, then placed himself in and began to pump.

He pounded into me like a beast. Stretching my walls and satisfying my need for him. Everything was heightened, and I was enjoying it.

I dug my nails into his skin and took it all.

Placing my legs over his shoulder and kneeling between my legs, he pumped viciously, going all the way in.

I saw his teeth elongate and his claws grow out, meaning he was enjoying himself. Knight was trying to take over, and I wanted him to.

He pumped and fought a claim. I shattered all over him, feeling liquid sip out of me. Sylvester finally came and lay by my side. I could see that he was relieved, and I was satiated.

“So you want to play detective?” he said. After we had laid down for forty minutes, I nodded.

“I, too, believe we will find something out in Jenny’s place. Hence why I sealed and guarded her house after her death,” he confessed, and I squealed at him.

“But I can’t let you go there with the ladies,” He said, and I frowned at him. He sat up and sighed.

“You are my life, Tamia. I have never been this much in love in my entire existence, and people know. They know you are my weakness. They know how much I love you because I do not hide it. I can’t, even if I want to,” he said and bowed.

“After what happened with Dominic, I realised people are out to get me and hurt me. They can only hurt me by hurting you and our baby. We will be parents soon, Tamia. I want you protected at all costs. I know you will do an excellent job, tell my men what to look for, and they will bring it, but I can’t let my wife out of my sight,” He said and bent to kiss my lower belly.

“I have wanted this all my life. A mate that genuinely loves my family and me. Now that I have you, I can’t be careless, Tamia. Please. Do not push it. These people are dangerous. They took Bryce’s

pregnant mate. I am not saying you are weak or can’t defend yourself, but they are cunning and unknown. There is nothing more difficult than fighting the unknown,” he said and touched my hand.

“Please, my love, do not argue with me on this one,” he pleaded and kissed my hand.

“I want you to instruct my men, and they will do as you have requested. Share your thoughts with Theodore and Marcel, but I won’t let you play detective. If you are bored, think of something to do for the All-regional games that does not involve you participating in the sports activities,” He said. I knew he needed me to say yes. He was genuinely afraid, and I could see it. So I nodded.

“Basically, what I need are journals, notes however insignificant. If I can’t go, at least let Theodore or Marcel lead the search. Finding these items isn’t the only important thing. How and where they are found matters. It can say a lot and give us more information than the items themselves,” I said, and he sighed.

“Very well, we will all go there. I will not let you out of my sight, Tamia. I won’t.” he said, and laid back down and pulled me close. He sucked on my sweet spot gently.

“I won’t survive if I lose you. If anything ever happens to you, my darling, I will become the Dark Alpha,” he said, and as much as it sounded like a joke, I knew he was serious.

We both fell asleep, and I woke up in the night.

It was nine at night, so I decided to walk to Avery’s wing to check on her. She had been depressed lately, and I knew it was because of my pregnancy.

I knew she feared something was wrong with her, just like I was. I was sure she was alright and would happen soon, but I needed to ensure she was okay.

I left my room barefooted so I don’t wake Sylvester. He was sleeping peacefully, and he needed the rest.

While I walked down the halls barefooted, causing me to have stealth, I heard someone whispering on the phone. I did not like eavesdropping, but these were dangerous times, so I leaned closer to listen.

“It is too tight right now; I can’t get it for you. You will have to wait and let things loosen up a bit. Maybe during the games,” A voice that sounded like Lily said. Then I heard her hang up and approach, so I hid behind a door. She walked out of the corner she was hiding and looked about to be sure the coast was clear before leaving.

I knew women from the harem were not allowed phones, and Sylvester never told me she had special privileges. Whatever she was doing, she was up to no good, and I wondered what she was asked to procure that would need to be done during the games when the security wasn't so tight anymore. I planned on telling Sylvester and having the woman investigated. She was scornful and might try to hurt us for it.

I walked and bumped into Stephanie, the last person I wanted to see.

~Tamia~

Stephanie did not look well. Her eyes were swollen, and her hands were shaking. It was clear that she had been crying.

I wanted to ignore her, but I couldn't. I knew Sylvester wouldn't, so I decided to show some concern.

"Are you alright?" I asked, and she looked at me and shook her head.

"I am not, Tamia. Everything is falling apart. Dominic won't come out of his room. He said he feels like a nobody. I have tried to talk him out of it, but he is too ashamed to let himself mingle," She said, and I nodded.

"You need to give him time, Stephanie. He had a near-death experience. If Bryce had not confessed, he might have been dead by now. He will need time to recover from it," I said, and she hugged me and began to cry.

I did not know what to tell her. So I hugged her in return and patted her back.

"You need to take it easy, Stephanie. Crying won't fix him. You need to find the things and people that make him happy and try to surround him with them," I said, and she sighed and bowed.

She looked at me and studied me.

"You will be the Lady of the north soon, Tamia; there are things I need to tell you. Things that I swore to take to my grave but I suspect are part of why all these are happening to my sons," She said, and I was surprised that she was willing to trust me with her secret.

"Are you sure you want to tell me?" I asked her, and she nodded.

“You will be Luna soon and rule by his side. You’re already doing it, and unlike me, your Alpha loves you and gives you freedom. You take part in council discussions and give advice. None of which I was allowed in my time. You give northern women hope, Tamia.” She said and sighed.

“There are things I need to tell for the sake of the Volkov bloodline. You need to know that you have a Volkov growing inside you. You need to know the truth about Maurice and our children..” She said, and my mind went to what Jake had told me.

Was she planning on telling me the truth, or was she planning on deceiving me like she might have deceived her children?

“Does it have anything to do with what is going on?” I asked, and she paused, looking at me. She was contemplating what to tell me. She was sizing me up, and I wasn’t angry at all.

“It might,” she confessed, and I looked at her.

“I will join you in your room in a few minutes. I want to check on Avery. The hallway isn’t as safe as we think; we might have spies lurking about the place,” I linked her, and she nodded at me.

I still could not shake off Lily’s phone conversation. I could not shake off the fact that I knew she wasn’t supposed to have a phone. I couldn’t shake it off. Something was off, and I planned on figuring it out.

Stephanie walked past me, heading to her room while I headed towards the Beta’s wing to see Avery. I would have checked on Linda too, but I knew she and Marcel went on a date.

I got to Avery’s door and knocked.

“It’s open,” I heard Avery say, and I gently let myself in. I saw my friend sitting on a couch and working on an embroidery piece. I looked at the leaf design she was weaving into the fabric and realised that her skill had improved, but she was still marring the fabric.

“Tamia, you and Sylvester missed dinner,” She said, and I nodded and sat beside her.

“How are you feeling?” I asked, and she sighed.

“I feel nervous,” She said, and I wondered why.

“Why?” I asked, and she sighed and put down her supposed artwork, which was more of a cluster and an honest attempt at being creative.

“I have wanted babies for as long, but when Michelle came into our lives, it became a tall dream. Now I found love again. Marcel and I started trying before you and Sylvester got together. Then Linda and Theodore got together,” She said and bowed her head and began to weep.

“Yet I am still waiting in line, Tamia. I waited in line with Max, and I believe that was why Michelle got the best of him, and now here I am with Marcel,” she said, and I moved close to her and rubbed her back.

“Do not be afraid, Avery; it will happen for you, too,” I said, rubbing her back.

“But when?” She asked, and I sighed.

“You should see a doctor to know if anything is wrong and if it can be corrected. That is what I would do,” I said, and she broke the hug and stared at me.

“You are right, Tamia,” She said and held my hand.

“Join me at the hospital tomorrow, please,” She said, and I remembered my conversation with Sylvester about protection and not being on my own.

“I suggest you go with Marcel. It would be best if you handled it together,” I said, and she shook her head.

“I want you to come with me, Tamia. I do not want Marcel. What if something is wrong with me? He will know and might change his mind. I love him, Tamia; I can’t lose him,” She said with genuine fear in her eyes.

“Nothing is the matter with you, Avery. I will speak to Sylvester to let me follow you to the hospital,” I said to ease her mind, and she thanked me.

I tried to counsel her to the best of my ability and decided to leave because I did not want to keep Stephanie waiting.

My actions might have seemed a bit stupid. Whatever Stephanie wanted to tell me must have been serious, so it was wrong to put her on hold, but I knew that whatever she was going to tell me might leave me shellshocked, and I won't be able to check on my friend, so I wanted to get it out of the way before speaking to Stephanie.

I walked still barefooted so people could not hear my footsteps. I took a mental note to do this often. Lily was on my watch list. I needed to know who gave her a phone and who she was communicating with.

I got to Stephanie's door and knocked.

"Please come in, Tamia; I know it is you," She said, and I let myself in.

"Lock the door," She said, and I did as she said and approached her where she sat on the couch in her room.

I went to sit with her, and she smiled at me. I was still wary of her, but I let it be because she was open to me again. There were only two possibilities: to misguide or tell the truth, so I was attentive.

"I am sorry to ask you this question, but I need you to be honest. How did it feel when Leo met his fated?" She asked, and I looked at her. I contemplated answering it, but I knew I had to, or the conversation won't make headway.

"Heartwrenching. My life was over. He was the lead alpha of the East; I had nowhere to go, and no one would want me. I could not leave, so I was there through it all until the north attacked and gave me a chance to escape," I said, and she looked at me stunned.

"Yes, I gave myself as a tribute to leave Leo. We would have subdued the people who attacked us, but I did not want to be the third wheel in their home anymore. They were going to be a family. There was no place for me," I said, and she looked at me worried, but I smiled at her.

"I am glad," I said and placed my hand on my belly. "I found love in the north and everything I ever wanted." I told her, and she smiled.

"Do you know if Leo were Sylvester, then truly you would have nowhere to go? Sylvester is a step up from Leo, but no one is a step up from the Wolf lord. So, in that case, you will be stranded forever, and even if you want to

leave him, it would be impossible. Society won't allow it, your family won't allow it, and your heart and wolf will hold on so tight, and it won't allow it. There is something in us that seeks the dominant male," She said, and I wondered why she was saying such things.

"I didn't call you here to discuss your relationship." She said and sighed. I called you here to discuss mine.

"Something my sons did not know was that their father had a fated," she said, and I exclaimed, pretending not to know so she could give me her version of the story.

"Everyone that knew was sworn to secrecy by Maurice. Her name was Alissa Pavlishchev, and she was from Gad in the western region. Only the people in the council and older western Alphas knew of her." She said.

"Maurice loved me wholeheartedly until he met her. He never slept with anyone. Like Sylvester is with you, my husband was that way with me. Maybe not exactly, but you get the picture," she said, and her eyes welled up in tears.

"I loved Maurice with all my heart, and I thought our lives would be rosy, but I was wrong. He met Alissa and took her as his mistress. My family and the council did not let him claim her because that would insult me, so he slept with her and made me endure unimaginable pain. The woman wasn't a saint, either. They never are. It is not by choice but by design. No fated would want to be a mistress. They see us as taking their space, so they would do anything to replace us fully and not share their mate.

She plotted against me and manipulated my husband.

She was the one that made him start the war frenzy. When my family and part of the council pushed back, Maurice moved to eliminate them to make her Lady and his Luna; I had given up hope. I had Dominic then, and he wasn't an Alpha, so I knew my days with Maurice were numbered. When she got pregnant, I left the estate and returned home with Dominic. Maurice did not look for me. He doted on her and loved her, but he never claimed her. The woman was so wicked that her people refused to come and work in the estate to help her. If you think I am lying, you can investigate. Because of this, Maurice forced me to return and be her midwife. I was maltreated and abused. He would beat me because of her and her lies, and she never ran out of lies. I was tired. If it was a lesser Alpha, I could run, but who would

challenge the wolf lord for my sake? I knew I wouldn't be able to leave until he let me go.

The goddess took pity on me and she died giving birth to her son. Maurice lost his mind. First, he said I poisoned her and had me locked up in a cell, but it was proven that she died of a dangerous case of preeclampsia. I was released and asked to care for the child, but I refused. I told Maurice I would not touch his bastard because that was what the boy was. Maurice felt guilty for locking me up, so he did not try to force me to care for the child. Soon he found out all the lies she told about me. When the boy turned one, Maurice found out he had an Alpha wolf, so he sent him to Grizlo in the north to be cared

for by a small family. Around that time, I was pregnant with Sylvester, but things weren't the same. Although Maurice loved me, the loss of his mate destroyed him, and he found himself drawn to women of the west who looked like her, so he started actively keeping a harem. He conquered the entire west for other reasons but took their women so he could replace Alissa briefly. I handled it well, had Sylvester, and when Maurice found that Sylvester was an Alpha, his love for me increased, and Alissa and her son faded away." She said and looked at me.

"That boy's name is David Pavlishchev. Maurice did not give him his last name because he was a bastard." She concluded, and I was in shock.

"That bastard was why I left here, Tamia. I went to see if I could find out about his whereabouts because he was the only one that would want to kill my sons. He is the only one who will have something to gain from this. Dominic and Sylvester do not know of his existence. I told Dominic yesterday, he didn't take it well. That is why I am telling you this so you can help me tell Sylvester. We need to find David and be sure he isn't behind all this. I do not have proof; I am just speculating, but I know you are good with investigations. I will need you to carry one out for me and figure it out," She said, but I was too dumbfounded to respond.

~Tamia~

Shock could not describe how I felt after Stephanie had told me everything.

I sat on the couch and stared at her, speechless.

“Why are you trusting me with this level of information, Luna Stephanie?” I asked her, and she wiped away her tears.

Going down memory lane was hard for her, and I could see she loved her husband dearly, just like I loved Leo, and I wouldn't have let him go.

To be fair to her, I could understand her predicament, which was why I had to let Devin go when he came to me.

I couldn't be selfish and crush the one person that dared to love me through my pain.

My heart truly belonged to Sylvester. I was lucky.

Stephanie did not have a Sylvester that would sweep her off her feet and rescue her, so she had to deal, but hearing her open up to me like this made me afraid.

I wasn't her best person; in fact, there was friction between us, and I doubted it would change. For her to tell me this meant she was desperate.

I tried to remain calm while I waited for her to respond.

“I think he is behind this, Tamia,” she said and bowed.

“He might feel cheated. He is an Alpha, and he is older than Sylvester. If he weren't a bastard, he would have been the lord of the north. I am sure he knows I am the reason Maurice could not marry his

mother properly,” she said, and I wondered if she was speaking from knowledge and not just a hunch. There was no way she wouldn't know what was going on in this David's mind if she wasn't privy to it.

I looked at her for a bit.

“Are you sure about these things?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“I can't lie about this,” She responded, and I wanted to beg to differ, but I held my tongue.

“You know if I tell Sylvester about this man, he will hunt him down, and there will be no going back from this,” I said and sighed.

“Are you sure he is a threat to my mate?” I asked her, letting her know Sylvester was my first concern, and she nodded. I smiled because I had her right where I wanted her.

“In that case, I need you to come clean about it. Tell me how you are so sure this man is a threat?” I asked her, and she looked at me and nodded her head.

“I do not know how to explain it, Tamia, but I just have a hunch. At least let us find him, and then we will know what to do from there,” She explained, and I understood what she wanted from me.

Stephanie wasn't sure of her hunch, and she knew Sylvester would not have a subtle approach, and his approach could aggravate this David. She wanted me to tell Sylvester about David and make sure he is subtle about it.

“Very well then..” I said, and just then, I heard Sylvester's voice in my head.

“Where are you?” He said, and I knew he had woken up and wondered where I had gone.

I got off the couch and looked at my barefoot.

“On my way back to you, darling,” I linked with him, and he was quiet.

“I have to go back,” I told Stephanie, and she nodded and looked at me.

“I am truly happy for both of you. I know it may not seem so, but I am. I am also begging you not to break his heart, Tamia. Susan left my baby wounded, which is why I have been uptight. Please.” She said and looked at my tummy.

“I am sure you two will make a great family,” She said, and I smiled at her.

“I cannot hurt him, Stephanie, and he knows it. I love him with everything I am, and I have turned my back on everything just to be with him. My love and heart are in his hands. I hope he does not break me,” I said, and she could not speak.

I did not owe her the explanation that I had rejected my fated for his sake. That was to remain between Sylvester and me, but she needed to know that I was in my relationship a hundred per cent, and I did not plan on ever letting my man go.

I hugged her and assured her everything would be alright before leaving her room and heading towards mine. I bumped into Lilly on my way, and she looked at my foot.

One thing I noticed was she was lurking around our corridors too much. I know Sylvester was easy on her, but this wasn't her wing.

"Good Evening, Luna," She said to me, already according me the respect of Luna.

"Hello, Lilly," I said, and she looked at my barefoot.

"Is that because you are pregnant?" She asked me with a tinge of jealousy, and I smiled.

"No, dear, it is so I can sneak around the place unnoticed," I said and walked away from her.

I felt her eyes on me, and I turned to wink at her.

I wanted her relaxed and a little bit on edge simultaneously. She was bound to make mistakes faster when on edge than when relaxed.

"I entered the room and went to bed. Sylvester wrapped his arm around me and kissed my neck.

"The bed was cold," he said, and I turned to look at him.

"Since when did a cold bed start troubling you?" I asked, wanting to laugh.

"When you started sleeping in it, Tamia," He said in his low deep voice, and it made me shiver in a good way. Sylvester knew how to turn me on, and this was one of those.

He came on top, and I knew the night would be longer than expected.

We had breakfast in the morning with our friends, and Sylvester brought up the investigation.

"I will want us to go through the things in late Jenny's house,"

Sylvester said, and Marcel looked at him.

“Have you told the Lawrences about it? Especially Vino. She might be occupying a Babanin seat, but she is still his aunt.” Marcel said, and I was a bit surprised that Jenny was Vino’s aunt, but the name was a dead giveaway. She was Jenny Lawrence; I just thought she was a different Lawrence. In light of this, things were a bit confusing in my head.

“I do not need permission, especially when I am trying to figure out why she was killed,” Sylvester said, and Marcel nodded.

“Sign me up,” Linda said immediately, and Theodore looked a bit pissed at her.

I understood why she committed herself quickly because she knew he would try to stop her because of the pregnancy.

“Are you sure it is the best way to go?” Marcel asked Sylvester, and he nodded.

“I knew my mother wasn’t the target of that attack. Jenny might have been involved in something or known something to be eliminated.” Sylvester said, and Marcel sighed.

“What about the wire transfers that Lily was working on? Does it show any funds leading to or from Jenny? We have to check everything knowing that your father almost wiped them out.” Marcel asked.

“They should lead somewhere,” Marcel added, and I remembered her phone call and contemplated bringing it up.

“All those anonymous transfers lead to the south, and now some are going east. I have asked Lily to take a break. I cannot leave her with a computer unattended, and I want to spend time with Tamia. So I will find another way to trace the transfers,” Sylvester said and touched my hand. He kissed it, making my body shake.

“I am worried that some people are stationing people in the east and west. With what has happened recently, I hope an attack that would be blamed on the north will not ensue. We are yet to understand why the transfers and the people they are going to are anonymous. I can’t shake off the fact that everything is directed at destroying my family. The fact that my father had many enemies does not help matters either. I am thinking of reaching out to the distant Volkovs for help,” He confessed, and I touched his hand.

“Very well, what time do we go to Jenny’s house, and how many of us are going?” Theodore asked. Sylvester smiled and kissed my hand again.

“See it more like a date because we are bringing our mates with us,” he said, and Marcel shook his head.

“Avery and I have a doctor’s appointment this morning,” He said, and Sylvester shrugged.

“Go and return. Pending on what the doctor says will determine whether or not Avery will be coming,” He said, and Marcel nodded and thanked him.

After the serious discussion, we returned to our food, and Sylvester could not keep his hands off my body. He got me all worked up that I might have gone on top of him in that room.

He breathed in my scent and ensured his pinewood scent surrounded me. He nibbled my ears and sucked on my sweet spot.

“My mark will be there soon, darling. You will be truly mine,” He linked me, and a faint moan escaped my lips. The room was a bit blurry, and he was getting me worked up.

“I am already yours,” I linked him back, and I felt his tongue brush through, making my body shiver and the hairs on my skin stand because of the goosebumps his action produced.

“Sylvester..” I moaned, and he placed a grape in my mouth, allowing his finger to enter my mouth. I sucked on it to let him know the work I could do to his cock. He felt it because Knight growled, and Kaira purred in my head.

“You two should get a room,” I heard someone say, but I was too far gone to know who did. It was between Linda and Avery.

We finished breakfast, and Sylvester and I returned to our bedroom.

I was wet and horny, but at the same time, I needed to tell him about Lily.

We entered the room, and he rushed at me, ready to take me. As much as I wasn’t selfish, he had ignited a fire that needed attention, so I let him go to work on my body.

It was a passion-filled morning, and I confessed to all sorts of things.

He made me say something that I wouldn't have on a typical day while hitting the right spot; with his intoxicating scent and the love I felt in my heart, I could promise him the moon, which wasn't mine to give by the way, but I could hypothetically give it to him because he had taken me there and back and he knew it.

We lay on the bed tired, with my head against his chest. I kissed his chest, and he touched my back gently.

I thought of the few times I heard of him while I was in the east.

If anyone told me he would be the love of my life back then, I wouldn't believe them, but the funny part was there was no day that I judged or resented him. It helped me decide to come to the north, and I was glad I did.

"I need to talk to you about something," I said, and he made both of us sit so he could look into my eyes. He looked worried, so I smiled at him to be calm.

"Are the women in the Harem allowed to have cell phones?" I asked him, and he froze.

"I can't let them have cell phones, Tamia; that will defeat the purpose of keeping them in check. They can also betray the north and easily sell information that way," he said, placing his hand on my cheek. He thought I wanted him to give them cell phones. It was cute.

"I know you are a kind woman, but please do not ask me to give them a phone. Please do not ask me to endanger the north." He said, and I shook my head and kissed his hand on my cheek by turning towards it. I used my hand to gently hold his palm against my face and closed my eyes to relish the feeling.

"I need you to act rational and wisely about what I am about to tell you. Promise me you won't lose your shit," I said, and he looked confused.

"Last night, I decided to check on Avery in her wing, so I left barefoot, knowing my attempt to wear something on my feet would wake you up. While I walked down the hallways, I heard a voice. I hid behind the door to listen; it was Lily talking on a phone. She told someone that things were a bit tight and she couldn't get something for the person and that the person should wait until during the all-region game when security is loose," I said, and I saw rage rise

in his eyes. Sylvester looked like he was about to kill someone, and I hoped it was nothing for Lily's sake.

~Sylvester~

I could not believe what Tamia had just told me about Lily.

I was so mad that I knew Knight could emerge.

I looked at my mate, and she did not seem like she was joking.

From the look in her green eyes, it took a lot of effort for her to tell me what she had just divulged.

I raised my hand, patted her head gently, and then kissed her lips. It was more to calm myself down than to tell her I was okay.

I knew I needed to be calm to handle the matter.

Lily was a big problem. If she was betraying me, then I was in trouble because she knew of my investigations, and she was helping me with one of them.

What if she was giving out the information to someone else?

I had always suspected I couldn't trust her, but when she came, she was innocent-looking, and I thought I could have the younger sister I never had.

I revoked her privileges when I heard all the awful things she did to the women in the harem.

I did not want to jump to conclusions, but I wanted to get up and go and find out the truth.

I was about to get up when Tamia stopped me with her hand.

"I have not finished talking to you, darling. Please be calm. I hope there is a rational explanation for what I heard and saw," She said, and I searched her eyes, my soul pleading, hoping that whatever she

needed to tell me next would be easy to digest.

"Here goes," She said and sighed.

“After the incident with Lily, I bumped into your mother.” She said, and I held my tongue. I did not want to say anything that would change the topic.

” She was crying, and she requested to speak to me immediately. Of course, I went to see Avery and then returned to your mother’s room.” She said and squeezed my arm.

“Your mother explained why she left the estate in a hurry that day Dominic was arrested, and what she went to do,” she said.

“According to her, your father had a fated called Lady Alissa Pavlishchev,” She continued, and I exclaimed. Tamia just nodded gradually and continued what she was saying.

“Your father accepted his fated and made your mother share. She did not have you then, and when the woman was pregnant, your mother left with Dominic. Things happened, and your mother was asked to return to care for her. All the while, he tried to divorce your mother, but her family was too important for him to divorce her successfully, so he started conquering the council families and the west. He wanted to own the world and be powerful enough to overthrow the council and marry this woman. According to your mother, the woman was evil and did many mean things. Eventually, she died giving birth to her son. This was relieving to your mother, but that was the beginning of your father growing his harem and getting involved with the women in the harem. He only went for women of western descent because they reminded him of his fated. Your father realised the boy was an Alpha, so he tried to get your mother to take care of the baby, but she said no, so he sent the boy to be cared for. She got pregnant with you, and everything became rosy after she gave birth to you, and he discovered you were an Alpha too.” She said and searched my eyes for emotions, but I made sure there was nothing in them so she would have the confidence to tell me the rest.

“When your mother left, it wasn’t an act of defiance, but to find David Pavlishchev, your half-brother, because she believed he might be the culprit. He has so much to gain if anything happens to either of you,” she said, and I knew she was right.

“Did my mother tell you his last known location?” I asked, and she shook her head.

“Very well, I will handle it,” I said, and she smiled.

She laid down a bit, and I held her in bed until she fell asleep.

It was time to go to the only part of the mansion I never visit. The Harem. I linked Theodore to meet me there with two women from my staff.

I kept my anger under control and moved swiftly.

When I got to the common hall of the harem, the entire place was silent. I had never visited there since the women had been brought. The last I was there was when we were actively involved with the former women in the harem before I let all of them go.

Marcel, Theodore and I threw orgies there and partied all night long. Thinking of the life I led back then; I was ashamed of myself and grateful that Tamia brought meaning and love back into my life because Susan left with everything, and I was nothing but an empty shell.

Most of the ladies were looking at me seductively, and I ignored them. My eyes searched and found Lily, who smiled at me.

I motioned her to come to me, and she approached eagerly.

“Take me to your bedroom,” I said, and I heard some women gasp. I knew what they were thinking, but I did not owe anyone any explanation.

We waited for Theodore to join us before leaving. I could see the giddiness in Lily’s eyes, and I remained silent.

“I hope Luna Tamia won’t be mad about this Alpha. I do not want to anger luna,” She said with a sly tone, and I wanted to hit her, but I controlled myself. If what Tamia said checked out, she would have betrayed me beyond repair. I was holding my temper.

“What is going on?” Theodore linked me.

“Be attentive,” was all I could manage, and he was silent.

We got to Lily’s room which she shared with two other girls, and I entered.

The room was beautifully furnished, and three beds were placed in it. Beside each bed was a vanity table. It looked like a luxurious hostel, which was the point, and Lilly stood with her head bowed.

I knew what she was thinking, and she began to undo her tunic to confirm my suspicion. I could feel her joy and expectation. I had never given her the sign that I wanted anything sensual with her, but I knew it was a fantasy in her head, and it almost cost me my relationship with Tamia.

“Keep your clothes on,” I ordered quietly. She looked confused but nodded.

“I am at your service, Alpha,” She said with her head bowed.

“Where is your bed?” I asked, and she eagerly pointed to the bed close to the wall. I linked the women that came with us to search through her things.

Lily became apprehensive immediately.

“What is going on, Alpha?” She said, looking worried.

“Hold her, Theodore,” I told my Gamma, and he did as I had said.

“Where is the phone, Lily?” I asked her and her eyes widened.

“Do not bother lying because people told me you have one. Where did you put it?” I asked her, and she bowed her head and began to sob.

“Where is it!” I yelled, feeling my anger bubbling to the surface at the realisation that there was indeed a phone and Tamia was right.

“Inside the mattress under my bed,” She confessed. The women lifted her mattress, and there the phone was.

They brought it to me, and it had no number and no messages, but the call log had an anonymous caller on it. The person was wise to hide their caller identity when calling.

“How did you get this?” I asked her calmly, and she sobbed. I tried to hold my temper because I knew I could kill her.

“What have you given them?” I asked her, and she continued to cry.

“Answer me!” I yelled with my authority, and she shook.

She struggled and broke away from Theodore and went on her knees.

“I am sorry, Alpha. I am sorry. They promised I would go home but threatened they would wipe my family out if I did not comply,” she said without answering my question.

“Do not test my patience, Lily. What did you give them, and who were you speaking to?” I asked her, and she began to sob.

“They did not give me a name. Sometimes it was a woman and sometimes a man,” She said, and I grabbed her neck and squeezed.

“What did you give them?” I asked, angry.

“Sylvester?” I heard Tamia’s voice in my head, and I cursed under my breath because I wasn’t expecting her to be awake.

“Sylvester?” I heard her voice again, and I released Lilly’s neck.

“Yes, darling, I am in Lily’s room; you are right,” I said, and she did not reply. I knew she was on her way.

“What did you give them?”

“Banking details, signatures, royal seals, envelopes, and I placed a backdoor on your computer to help them monitor what you were doing,” She said quickly, and I slapped her.

She fell to the ground. I was enraged.

Chapter 52 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna

~Tamia~

This was unheard of.

We sat on the grass for thirty minutes, and nothing.

“Do you feel anything? Is your wolf weak?” I asked, and he shook his head.

“Wow,” I said, and he chuckled lightly.

“Sylvester is lucky to have you,” he confessed, and I bowed my head.

“You were right, Tamia. I should have seized that moment, but I didn’t. It is my loss,” he said, and I smiled at him.

“I know you will find someone that will love you genuinely, Devin, but please stop fighting Sylvester. He isn’t a bad guy,” I said, and he laughed.

“It’s funny you ask me not to fight the guy you rejected me for,” he said, and I knew I sounded a bit stupid.

“But I understand. Because there was no love between us, all my longing for you is gone, and I am sure the same for you. I guess the bond is only a guide to help us build a relationship and fall in love, hence why Leo has been unable to get over you,” he said and touched my hand and kissed it gently.

“I liked you from the moment I saw you, and I still do. I won’t attack Sylvester because of you, Tamia, but if he looks for my trouble, I will give it to him,” He said, and I could feel pain and heartbreak in his eyes, even though he was trying to hide it.

“You will find someone worthy,” I said to him, and he nodded and stood up.

“I doubt she will be anything like you, Tamia. You are one of a kind,” He said, and I smiled.

He stretched his hands and helped me stand up. Then pulled me close and kissed me. I let him, and he broke the kiss.

“I will remember this, Tamia and I will always seize my moment so I do not lose out. If he ever hurts you, you can call on me, Tamia,” He said and caressed my cheek longingly.

“I will always answer you whenever you call me. I promise you. I do not know why this rejection did not hurt or weaken us, but I am glad that other than the heartache, we did not lose much,” he said, and I kissed his palm, hoping I hadn’t made a mistake and condemned myself for nothing.

He held my hand, and I could see he was reluctant to let go.

“Bond aside, just like Sylvester, I too would have fallen in love with you, and maybe I had a little bit that night,” He said.

We both chuckled lightly.

He patted my cheek and left me in the gardens, and as he walked away, my heart was overcome with fear. Fear of the unknown. This was my chance to be with my fated, and I had thrown it away. I prayed to the goddess that I had not made a wrong choice and that this would not end up hurting me.

I returned to the party and sat on the high table next to Avery.

“Goddess, Tamia, you looked ravaged,” She said, and I felt tears wanting to fall.

I felt I had wronged Sylvester and cheated on him by letting Devin kiss me and touch me. Tears began to fall, and Avery quickly made them excuse us, so they wouldn’t see my tears.

We returned to the room, and I began to cry.

“What happened? You reek of someone else, Tamia. What did you do? Were you attacked?” she asked, and I shook my head.

“I found my fated tonight,” I told her, and she gasped.

“Fuck!!!” she yelled and sat beside me.

“Fuck fuck fuck!!!” She exclaimed.

“I let him kiss me; he almost claimed me, and I liked it,” I said, crying. She held me.

“This is not good for you and Sylvester, Tamia,” she said, and I shook my head.

“I rejected him, and he accepted, but I still feel like shit. I feel like I have cheated on Sylvester,” I said, and she hugged me.

“You have done the bravest thing that no alpha has been able to do. I am sure a kiss will be better than running off with your fated. Besides, nothing happened between you two; it was just a kiss. Wash his scent off your body and forget about it. You don’t have to tell Sylvester about it if a reason doesn’t exist. Telling him about it means that it meant something, and from how you are behaving, I know it meant nothing, so let it go,” she said, and I nodded.

“Who was it?” She asked me, and I looked at her.

“Devin Corrigan,” I said, and her eyes looked like they were going to pop out of the sockets.

“No way!” she exclaimed, and I nodded.

“That explains a lot. The way he behaved at the dinner was weird. You couldn’t sense him because of Leo’s mark,” She said, then stood up and began to pace.

“No wonder he attacked the Volkov estate for you. No wonder people were asking if anything was between you two. Why didn’t he claim you as his at the party?” She asked the same question that I asked him.

“He said he wanted the moment to be perfect,” I said, and she chuckled.

“His loss. Did the man ever hear of the saying Seize the Moment?” she said, and I did not know what to say.

“I guess not,” she concluded.

“Look, darling, dust yourself and move on,” She said, and I nodded,

“What if Sylvester finds his fated and makes me share?” I asked her, and she realised what was truly troubling me.

“I am sure you did not sacrifice for the wrong man, but if that ever happens, I know you are strong to handle it,” She said and came to sit with me and rub my hand gently.

“I do not think you should worry about things like that. All we can know is the moment, and we must live in it. Tomorrow is beyond our control. Let it take care of itself,” she said and lifted my chin gently.

“Today and now, Sylvester loves you; I doubt anything will ever change that,” She said and kissed the top of my head.

“Come on, we need to shower and pack our bags. I want to see my man tomorrow morning, and you need Sylvester’s comfort, after which you will have to see the doctor because you do not seem fine,” she said, and I laughed a bit.

She led me to the shower, and I had a warm bath, after which food was brought to our room by Iris, and we thanked her for her kindness.

Alpha Jake came to check on us, and Avery told him my illness had worsened, and I needed to rest.

We also told him we would like to leave as early as five in the morning.

He thanked us for staying and attending the festival and hoped we would see each other soon.

I assured him the party would not be far, and he promised to attend.

I was restless most of the night, and it took a while before sleep came.

Contrary to what we said would happen, we woke around six in the morning, and I was too sick to do much.

I wondered if it was the rejection that made my sickness worse.

Denis drove us to Gad, where we got into the jet to return to the north.

I heaved most of the time in the car, and my skin was burning.

I wanted to know if Devin was affected too, but somehow I doubted it. I believe it was mainly because of my sickness.

The flight felt like forever, and when we landed in the north, Kappa Wilson, whom I did not like much for slapping me when they brought us to the north, was there to receive us.

He saluted us and treated us with the utmost respect.

I thought he would want to slap me again, and I wanted to tease him about it, but my physical health and sadness did not let me tease him.

We arrived at the estate, and I was eager to see Sylvester, but none of them was home; neither he nor Marcel nor Theodore.

Linda came to receive us, and we went to my room. By then, it was evident that I was ill.

“What happened to her?” I heard Linda ask Avery while she used a cold towel to bring down my temperature.

“She was sick before we left, but it took a turn for the worse last night,” Avery said, and Linda was worried.

“Please, get better because Stephanie is back, and she is a terrible bitch now. She has taken over the estate, and Sylvester does not even care,” she said, and I heaved.

I was in no physical condition to banter with anyone.

“Call Sylvester on the phone, tell him to send a doctor,” Avery ordered Linda, and Linda took out her phone and placed a call to Sylvester. It seemed like he did not pick so she called another number.

“Darling,” She said, and I knew it was Theodore.

“Avery and Tamia are back. Please tell alpha to send a doctor; Tamia isn’t feeling well,” She said, and he said something and hung up.

“Sylvester is in a meeting, so he said he would send a doctor instead and tell Sylvester once he is through with the meeting.

“He should tell him now. She needs him,” Avery yelled at Linda, and Linda shook, wondering why the urgency.

She called back and insisted that he tell Sylvester immediately that it was a serious matter.

“He said okay,” She said, and Avery and Linda led me to the bathroom and made me get into the bathtub filled with cold water.

“I will add ice to it now to crash your temperature; the doctor is on the way,” She said, and I nodded.

I could pick up every scent in the room. It was nauseating.

Soon, the doctor arrived, and I was carried to the room and placed on the bed. Sylvester came immediately and ran to my bedside.

He looked worried and scared.

“What is going on?” he asked, and I could hear the fear in his voice. I wish I could speak, but I was too sick to talk. He kissed my lips, then my cheek and my palm. I heard Knight growl, and I tried to smile so he would be at peace.

“The doctor just arrived. We hope he will tell us,” Avery said, and Sylvester looked at me.

“Tamia, please stay with me,” he said, and I nodded. So he would know I was still awake and okay, just feverish and nauseous.

I touched his hands and squeezed weakly.

He kissed me on the lips and forehead, and the doctor took some blood samples.

“How long has she been feeling this way?” The doctor asked, and Avery was too afraid to say how long in the presence of Sylvester so he would not be pissed, but she had no choice.

“Five days now,” She said, and Sylvester exclaimed.

“She has been throwing up her food and eating much. She has also been burning up.” Avery said, and the doctor nodded.

“Mood swings?” He asked, and Avery could not answer.

“I will need a sample of her urine for a quick test,” he said, and Sylvester carried me to the toilet to pee into a cup so it could be used.

He was gentle and handled me with care. I knew he was afraid and was only trying to be strong.

I managed to pee, and he carried me back to bed.

He returned to the toilet to get my urine sample for the doctor.

I noticed the doctor put a strip in the cup and took it out.

He held the strip in his hands and waited, and soon the confusion in his eyes turned into a broad smile.

He looked at Sylvester and smiled,

“Congratulations, my Lord. Lady Tamia is pregnant”

~Sylvester~

When Theodore interrupted my speech at the northern council conference, I knew something serious had happened.

I politely excused myself. I went to him.

I could hear people murmuring, but soon, Marcel took over, and they were silent.

That was why it was best I wrote my speeches. He just picked up from where I left off.

Theodore stood when I approached him.

“They are back,” He said, and I smiled, glad that Tamia had returned.

I was worried she might see Leo or Devin, and they would convince her to leave with them.

The painful part of that fear was that I wouldn't have gone after her if she had willingly followed. Otherwise, I would have given my mother, Dominic and the entire council the war they had longed for and burned the south or east to the ground.

“Tamia is ill. Linda asked that I send a doctor, which I did, but then she insisted I tell you. I think it is serious,” He said, and images of her being poisoned by Jake Brighton just to get at me flooded my mind.

I was out the door before Theodore could finish the sentence.

People were looking at me weirdly.

The moment I stepped out, I hopped into the first car I saw. It wasn't mine, but I was lord, and the driver was already behind the wheel.

“Volkov estate now!” I ordered him, and he started his vehicle.

I did not know who he worked for; I will have to apologise later.

We arrived at the estate, and I rushed into the building and went straight to my room.

Avery and Linda were with her. She looked pale and sweaty but seemed a bit calm. The doctor was examining her, and I went to hold her hands. Knight was afraid, so I had to try and control myself.

When the doctor congratulated me that she was pregnant, I was shocked. Knowing that Linda did not feel the same way made me still worried that Jake did something.

“Linda is pregnant, and she isn’t ill?” I asked the doctor.

“People experience pregnancy differently, but I will still take her blood sample to test for other things. If there is anything, she is already recovering from it. I will give her a mild sedative to help her relax and sleep it off, but there is no cause for alarm here. She will be alright when she wakes up; she just needs to rest,” he said, administered the sedative, and packed his things to leave.

I watched Tamia’s eyes close gradually until she fell asleep.

Linda and Avery excused themselves, and I stayed with her.

There was a knock on my door thirty minutes later, and I rushed to open it so the person did not bang too hard and wake Tamia up. I knew it was my mother. She was the only one that dared to do that.

I opened the door, and she frowned at me. Not wanting her in my room, I stepped outside.

“What is wrong with her?” She asked, and I knew she must have heard.

“What do you care?” I said, and she sighed and bowed her head.

“I know I misbehaved the last time, and I am sorry. It was just that treason is a serious crime, and I knew they would want to kill Dominic. Tamia threatened to deal with Dominic if he caused you trouble. You are a fool for her. I was angry, but I don’t hate her. I just went to my family home to calm down and think things through.” She said, and I knew she was being honest, but Tamia wasn’t comfortable with her anymore, and that was a relationship she would have to fix alone.

“Your words and actions hurt her, mother. Even though she didn’t say it, I could see it. You called her a whore, among other things; words like that don’t get forgotten,” I said, and she bowed.

“Do you know she was the only one that believed Dominic didn’t do it? She was the one that urged me to dig instead of passing judgment. Dominic has been a problem for me, so it was easy to think he would pull off that stunt. It was Tamia that made me question the enforcer. She was the one that made me look at other factors, yet you were busy antagonising her and making her feel inadequate. I am disappointed in you, mother. Anyone looking from the outside would say you didn’t birth me with how you acted. You always side with him over me; you never have my back,” I said, tears streaming down her face.

“Do not say that, Sylvester. I gave birth to both of you. I threatened to disown him if he went for the hearing. That was why he stayed. I also say hurtful things to Dominic, but I have to feel sorry for him. He is the older of you two, yet he has nothing, no position, no charge and respect. Things like that get to people. You have it all, Sylvester; he has nothing. He has to live in your shadow for the rest of his life. It is not your fault, but I know it gets to him, so he is always eager to prove that you are flawed so he can feel better. Larry has worked on his insecurities and used them. I was happy you locked the douchebag up. I gave birth to both of you. Do not ever think otherwise,” She said and bowed her head.

“I am sorry about Tamia, but I am really concerned for her. I knew she went to the west because of you. It was a brave thing to do on her part, and I commend her, but I am concerned. Jake isn’t vindictive, but I can’t say the same for Donald Brighton. He is the next alpha, and he has a grudge against this family. Just like Devin, his mother was taken by your father,” she said and looked around us.

I realised she wanted to tell me other things people weren’t supposed to hear, so I opened the door to my room and let her in.

I signalled her to keep it down, and she looked at Tamia, where she was sleeping.

“She is pale,” She said with concern, and I nodded.

“Doctor said she will be fine,” I said, and she looked at me.

“Do you mind if I examine her?” She asked, and I did not know how Tamia would feel about it, but since I was there, I decided it wouldn’t be any harm.

She touched Tamia’s forehead and palm and checked her nails; Tamia stirred in her sleep but did not wake up.

“Did the doctor take a blood sample?” She asked, and I nodded.

“I think she ingested a small amount of poison, and I also think she is pregnant,” she said, and I was panicked because she could be right.

“No need for alarm; her system is fighting whatever was introduced into it,” She said and patted her hair gently.

“She is pregnant,” I confirmed, and she gasped. A wide grin spread across her face.

“Congratulations,” she said softly and looked at Tamia lovingly.

“I hope she will give me another chance.” She said, and I doubted Tamia would be that nice again, but I kept it to myself.

“You were going to tell me something about Donald Brighton, mother,” I said, and she nodded. We moved to the couch area, and she sat.

“Yes, Ava Brighton. A bitch ...” she said scornfully.

“She and Gretchen were brought as trophies. Gretchen was Jake’s younger sister. She was stunning and a looker. Your father eagerly drafted her to join his harem and reluctantly drafted Ava. He favoured Gretchen of all his bedmates, and Ava got jealous. Gretchen thought she was being nice when she pleaded with Maurice to send her sister In-law back to her husband, and Maurice considered it. I hated that bitch because she almost took my husband from me. Ava did not see it as an act of kindness on her part. She saw it as a way of reducing her competition. The bitch thought Maurice liked her too, and Gretchen was only trying to get rid of her. So she pleaded with Maurice to remain in his service and continue to warm his bed,” She said and wiped away her tears.

It was clear that my mother’s selective memory was her coping mechanism.

Sometimes she would say he had to sleep with those women to learn their husband's secrets and be ahead of them, but here she was admitting that his method was fucked up, but I held my tongue.

"Ava murdered Gretchen in cold blood, driving a silver blade through her heart in this room," she said, looking around.

"She had come to plead with Maurice to let her say, and instead of finding Maurice, she found Gretchen in his bed naked, looking freshly fucked, and she snapped. You see, Maurice had stopped touching Ava, and it bothered her," she said and bowed her head.

"Maurice had her locked up in the dungeon, and one drunken night, he went to her cell and took her life," she said, and I was stunned.

"What he did was against the law. Ava was supposed to stand trial for her crime, slave or not. But he acted on impulse, and we swept it under the carpet. No one knew this, but Donald hates the Volkovs because of it. He thinks his mother was brought here as a slave and killed unjustly. I doubt Jake knows the truth," She said, and I looked at Tamia.

"Our family has many enemies, hence why the rest of the Volkov bloodline are quiet and not bearing our last name. It was wrong to send her to Brighton. I am sure they wanted to kill her. She just didn't ingest enough," she said, and I hoped for Jake's sake there was nothing in Tamia's blood or I would destroy Brighton.

"Is there a record of this?" I asked her, and she nodded.

"The recordkeeper kept a record," She told me, and I nodded, hoping to use it when the time comes.

"The council have sent enforcers for Dominic's hearing. They want to move him and Bryce to the council prison," Theodore said through the mind link, and I got up immediately.

"What is the matter, son?" My mother asked, and I shook my head. I dared not tell her what was happening.

"Council matters," I said, and she nodded.

“I will take my leave. Tamia likes yoghurt and fruits. She also likes smoked salmon in her salad. I will have the kitchen staff prepare her favourite so she can eat when she wakes up; she has lost some weight.” My mother said, and I thanked her.

We both left the room.

Although I knew she meant no harm, I did not want her to be the first person Tamia would see when she woke up.

I linked Avery and Linda to go to my room and be with Tamia, then headed to the dungeons where the enforcers were waiting.

Marcel was there, and Dominic stood in chains with fear in his eyes.

“What is the meaning of this?” I asked, and the leader bowed his head.

“Your Eminence, Councilwoman Pamela asked us to transfer the suspects to the council prison so they can stand trial tomorrow,” He said, and I nodded.

“They will stand trial tomorrow; tell her I will be presiding over the case, and the prisoners will remain in my custody until then. Now leave,” I said. I knew it wasn’t my place, but I was going to bend the rules for Dominic’s sake. Someone wanted him to be the fall guy, and I wasn’t going to allow it.

“With all due respect, my lord, the council decides on criminal matters,” he said, and I nodded.

“Then tell them I am overriding the decision this time. If they have an issue, they should face me directly on the matter,” I said, and the man nodded, saluted me with respect and left.

“What is with the council? Why are they quick and eager to convict Dominic,” Marcel said, and I looked at my brother.

“Someone is desperate to cover their tracks by making him the fall guy,” I said, and there was hope in Dominic’s eyes.

“What?” Marcel said.

“Tamia and I have been digging, and we found some really troubling things. They were hoping I wouldn’t investigate because of the friction between Dominic and me. They were right, had Tamia not insisted, I would have let

them deal with him,” I said and looked at Dominic, who looked ashamed of himself.

“You did this to yourself, big brother. Always working against me and trying to prove that I am incompetent. You would have been the fall guy for nothing.” I said, and he remained ashamed.

“Double Bryce and Dominic’s security. I do not want a mishap,” I linked Marcel and Theodore, and they nodded.

I returned to my room to be with Tamia.

~Tamia~

Everyone was elated by the news except for Sylvester. I could see he was happy, but he squeezed my hand gently.

“Thank you, doctor, but why is she ill? Linda is pregnant, and she isn’t ill,” He said, and I could understand his reaction to the news.

“People experience pregnancy differently, but I will still take her blood sample to test for other things. If there is anything, she is already recovering from it. I will give her a mild sedative to help her relax and sleep it off, but there is no cause for alarm here. She will be alright when she wakes up; she just needs to rest,” He said.

“I will administer a mild sedative to help her rest”, he added.

The doctor administered the medication and left. Leaving Sylvester, Avery and me in the bedroom.

My eyes became heavy, and I fell asleep.

I woke up to see Sylvester lying beside me in bed and working on his computer. I groaned, and he looked at me and smiled.

He put his computer on the nightstand and kissed my forehead.

“If you were a child, I would have said you were grounded,” He said with a tinge of anger, and I understood.

His eyes were teary, and he was fighting his emotions.

“Anything could have happened to you out there, Tamia. Anything. Why would you keep something so significant from me?” He asked, and I gradually sat up.

“Had I told you I was throwing up and feeling feverish, you would not have allowed me to go, and I did not trust the council to do your bidding in the west,” I said, and he bowed his head and then looked at me.

“How are you feeling now?” He asked and placed his hand gently on my belly.

His touch felt good against my skin, and I wanted his hand to linger.

Kaira was silent because she was ashamed of what we did and what she almost allowed to happen. I understood her shame.

“Don’t do this again. Always tell me what you are going through, Tamia. We will get through it together no matter how terrible it is,” He said, and I nodded.

“So we will be parents soon,” he said with a broad grin, and I smiled at him.

I felt like shit.

How would I tell him I saw Devin and we made out? How would I tell him he was my fated, but I rejected him? How?

“Please don’t,” Kaira pleaded with me, afraid.

I understood her fear because making out with Devin and almost allowing him to claim us felt like a great betrayal.

“How were things over there?” he asked, and I told him everything Alpha Jake told me about the attack.

He took off his shirt and snuggled into bed beside me to hold me.

I felt at peace when he wrapped his arms around me and enveloped me with his scent. I held him resting my head on his chest, and looked up at him.

“I love you, Sylvester. Please don’t break my heart,” I said in tears, and he frowned. He was surprised at my sudden mood.

“I can never hurt you, Tamia,” He said and placed my hand on his chest to feel his heartbeat.

“I cannot live without you.” He said.

“If your fated shows up, what would you do?” I asked, and he sat up gently. I gently sat up, too, and he looked at me.

“I make my destiny, Tamia, and I choose you and our baby. She would have shown up late. I have given everything to you, Tamia; I have nothing to give her,” he said, and I bowed my head, knowing how strong the pull was and how Leo failed.

Devin was a gentleman, unlike Amanda, who was persistent. Devin respects my wishes; what if his fated is like Amanda, persistent?

“What if the pull is so strong and you can’t say no?” I asked him, tears streaming down my face.

“I will prove that my love is stronger than the legendary pull of the mate bond. I will choose you over and over again. You have nothing to worry about. Soon we will be married and welcome our baby into the world. My fated has no room in my life,” he said with conviction.

“Your mother hates me, Sylvester. What if she interferes?” I said, and he shook his head.

“My mother doesn’t hate you, and she can never make me do anything I do not want to do,” He said and lifted my hand and kissed it.

“This is it,” he said, pulling me close to kiss him.

His lips felt so good on mine, and I opened up to receive the goodness he was giving. Erasing Devin’s kiss.

I kissed him hungrily, wanting to feel every bit of him, knowing this was it for me.

My heart was beating fast. A mixture of joy and uncertainty.

He travelled with his lips to my neck and sucked.

I wanted him to sink his teeth in and seal the deal.

I wanted to disregard tradition and just go for it. I held his head tightly, and he growled and groaned. He was fighting Knight, and I did not want him to.

Kaira gave me strength, and I straddled him and opened my robe.

He went for my breasts with his lips, and I looked up, pushing my chest to give him access.

He worshipped them and paid attention. I felt his bulge, and I wanted him to seal the deal.

He gently flipped our positions and got off the bed, leaving me gasping for air and disappointed.

“You need to rest, Tamia. I want you so badly that if I go ahead now, I will claim you,” He confessed, and I took off my robe completely.

“I do not care, Sylvester. I am already yours,” I said, and his eyes went completely dark.

He had entered a battle he would lose because Knight charged back to the bed and kissed me hungrily; he moved down my body fast and went between my legs.

“Mine,” he growled his famous words.

The words that brought me back from the trance.

The words that helped me keep my promise and gave me control.

I welcomed the words and opened wider for him.

He teased my knob with his tongue and then looked at me to be sure I was seeing what he was doing. He sucked gently, and I moaned. He looked at me again.

“I won’t be able to control myself,” He told me, and I shook my head.

”Then don’t,” I said, and he knelt between my legs and drove his cock into me.

He growled and began to pump fast and hard.

I welcomed it, but a part of me said I was wrong.

He should know...

He should know, and just like that, my body went cold, and I began to cry.

Sylvester gently pulled out and lifted my face to look at him.

“What is the matter, green eyes?” He said with concern, and my tears fell freely.

“I did something bad, Sylvester, and I am afraid you will hate me for it,” I said, and he froze.

“What did you do, Tamia?” He asked gently. I knew he was controlling himself.

He stood up from the bed, and I looked at him, afraid.

“What happened?” He said, and my tears fell freely.

“I...I...I...,” I said, stuttering between sobs.

“I saw Devin at the festival,” I said. He clenched his fists, and his hands began to shake. His eyes darkened instantly, and I could see anger rise in them. There was no going back from this.

“He was my Fated,” I said, and Knight began to growl. I could feel the pressure of his presence.

“I did not know until last night, Sylvester. I swear. I did not know. He said it was because of Leo’s mark,” I said, rushing through the words, but his growls became louder.

“The pull was strong and intoxicating, and we made out,” I confessed, and he roared. I wiped away my tears.

“He almost claimed me, but I rejected him. I rejected him. It took a lot of effort, but I rejected him,” I said and looked at him.

“I had nothing to give him. He accepted because he realised that my heart belonged to you. It was hard, but he accepted it.” I said and began to weep.

He approached me on the bed, and my heart was pounding from fear. I thought he would do something crazy, but he hugged me tightly and kissed my neck.

“It’s okay, darling. It’s okay. You didn’t do anything wrong. You did not betray me. You did something most people are incapable of; you honoured me and kept your promise,” He said and sucked the soft spot of my neck.

“You have nothing to be ashamed of. You and Kaira have nothing to be ashamed of,” he said, looking at me with his black wolf eyes.

“Thank you, Tamia, thank you for coming back to me,” he said, tears streaming down his face. He was afraid.

“Your sacrifice will not be in vain, Tamia. I promise I will never do anything to make you regret choosing me instead of your fated. I promise you.” He said, and I nodded; tears of fear and uncertainty streamed down my face, and he hugged me and kissed my neck.

“I am yours, Tamia. My heart, body and soul. You will never have to share me with anyone. I will never hurt or betray you. I will never touch anyone else until I die. It will only be you now and always. Just you, Tamia and no one else. I love you,” he said and arrested my lips with his.

He laid me down gently on the bed and gradually used his tongue to leave a trail of pleasure on my skin. Tracing from my neck to my core. He sucked on my mound gently, and all the fear I felt was replaced with pleasure; the load was lifted, and I felt light.

I came immediately, and he placed himself in me and pumped. His eyes were dark, and Kaira took over.

He pumped and pumped, and I came several times. Even though we weren’t fated, I hoped this was it.

We lay in the bed naked, and Sylvester cracked many jokes about what his mother did when she returned.

According to him, she was hurt he didn’t come after her. She wanted to go missing, and he would come and beg her, and then she will make her demands as her condition to return. When that didn’t happen, she returned and accused him of abandoning her and choosing me over her. The woman

was just unbelievably petty. Sylvester wanted me to forgive her, but I bore no grudge against her, to begin with. I had just decided that I would be careful around her.

Stephanie had said hurtful and mean things to me. It wasn't okay. It wasn't okay for her to switch and insult my friends and me because she was hurt. It wasn't okay.

I could understand Sylvester's willingness to forgive her; she was his mother, but I couldn't.

After what Jake had told me, I planned on investigating her too.

I knew the woman was hiding something and was determined to find it out.

"Dominic and Bryce will be tried tomorrow. Do you think you can join me?" He asked, and I searched his eyes.

"With Stephanie around?" I asked him, and he laughed.

"She won't trouble you. She knows what you did for Dominic.." He said, and I interrupted him.

"I didn't do it for her. I did it for you and the love of truth. She shouldn't get it twisted. The things she said to me still hunts me. Calling me and my friends social climbers and eastern whores.." I said, and Sylvester touched my hand and kissed it.

"You aren't any of those things.." he said, and I nodded.

"I know I am none of those things, Sylvester, but it isn't alright that she calls us names. It isn't easy being here. If it weren't for the love we found with you, Marcel and Theodore, Avery, Linda and me would not have it easy mentally. It isn't okay," I said, and he pulled me close.

"I am sorry about the condition in which you were brought here, Tamia. I will never take prisoners again. It is a tradition that I am ready to abolish, but I will want you with me tomorrow," He said, and I nodded.

"With pleasure," I said, and we both smiled.

I knew the trial would be tedious because I suspected the culprit of being in the council. If not, the entire panel and Vino was too weak and scared to do their job.

~Tamia~

“That went well,” Kaira said, purring in my head as Sylvester walked to the bathroom naked.

I stared at his chiselled body, and it made me groan. How could someone be carved so perfectly? Tight butt cheeks, define calves. His muscles flexed, and his tattoo was masterfully done.

“How did we end up with such a hottie?” Kaira said, and I had to shut my horny wolf up because Leo was hot too but not this hot.

Kaira was a complete contrast from a few hours ago when she was panicking about our make-out session with Devin.

I wondered how Devin was doing and if he had indeed moved on. I hoped so because the last thing I wanted was for him to feel cheated.

“Come over,” I heard Sylvester in my head, and I left the bed naked and went into the bathroom. He laid in the tub with water and asked me to sit between his legs so he could wash me.

I got in with him, and he kissed my shoulder, which made me moan. He lathered the sponge and began to wash my skin. I knew I was being pampered, so I relished the moment. Taking everything in and letting him spoil me.

Morning came, and we had our breakfast together.

Everyone congratulated me, and I noticed Avery was a bit affected by it. She was happy for me, but she was sad for herself.

I touched her hand lightly to encourage her, and she knew that I knew.

Soon we left the place and got ready to go to the council hall.

Stephanie approached us on our way out, and I was a bit uncomfortable.

I did not know what to tell her, but I chose to be civil for Sylvester’s sake.

“Good morning, dear Tamia,” she said, and I smiled at her in response.

“Congratulations. Thanks to you I will soon be a grandma,” She said, looking genuinely happy, and I smiled at her, not wanting to say anything.

She touched my hand and patted it lightly.

” We should talk when you return,” she said gently with pleading eyes. I did not want to be alone in a room with her, but I knew Sylvester won’t see anything wrong with it, so I nodded.

“As long as the conversation does not include my doom and slurs, I will make room,” I said, and Sylvester chuckled.

She pulled me into a hug.

“I am sorry for all the hurtful things I said to you,” She said. Because she didn’t strike me as the type to eat her words, I was wary of her apology, but I accepted it for Sylvester’s sake. I did not want him to feel torn between his mother and me, but I had questions for her and hoped she would be truthful enough to answer them.

We walked away, and a vehicle was waiting for us.

Usually, Sylvester used his jeep; I wondered why he opted to have a driver drive us in a car. We got into the backseat, and he held me.

“A car?” I said, and he nodded.

“No one drives my jeep, and I want to hold you all through,” He said and kissed my neck.

“I still can’t believe you rejected your fated for me. You have proven to me that true love exists,” he said, and I looked at him and searched his eyes. The driver started the vehicle and moved.

“I was scared you would be mad,” I confessed, and he shook his head.

“I wasn’t growling from anger, green eyes; I was growling from fear. Ever since the attack on the northern gates, I have feared that Devin would take you from me. What you told me has now put my mind at peace,” He said and touched my belly lightly.

“I want to claim you so badly, and I doubt I can wait until the blue moon. If I did not need the blue moon for it to work, I would have done it last night. I want us to be connected on all levels, Tamia; I want you inside me. I want you to share my soul, and I share yours,” he said, and we kissed.

We finally arrived at the council hall and went to sit in Sylvester’s box. Everyone was there, Avery, Marcel, Theodore and Linda. On the floor at the centre was a broken version of Dominic, a very afraid Bryce and a furious version of Larry.

I knew Larry shouldn’t be there, but Sylvester wanted to humiliate the man and make him suffer.

He was justified to do so because the man tried to use Dominic to work against him.

The sooner Dominic realises the enemy is from without, the better.

Vino greeted Sylvester and acknowledged our presence, then handed over to Jacob Mikhailov, the council spokesman.

“I speak on behalf of the council when I say you have overstepped your bounds, my lord,” The man said, and Sylvester was silent.

“Civil and criminal matters are overseen by the council. You have abused your power by holding the prisoners in your custody and choosing to preside over this case. We hereby ask you to withdraw and only observe as we deal with the matters.” He said, and Sylvester raised his hand and signalled the man to be seated.

“Tell me of the council’s investigations and findings first before I respond to your demand,” He said calmly.

Pamela, who I had slowly started to hate, stood up to speak.

“What more is there to know? Enforcer Golubev has confessed the truth. We are here for sentencing,” she said, and I could feel Sylvester’s rage.

“If it was possible to unseat this council, I will. This council has failed woefully in their duty. Was it not this council that accused me of being wicked without investigating the allegation against me? And now you have done the same. Unfortunately, I will decide on this one because my brother is involved. I have

done some investigations, and here are my findings. Enforcer Golubev has confessed that he was blackmailed into framing Dominic Volkov. We are in possession of the letter he received from the culprit instructing him to go to the East and cause trouble, and name Dominic as the culprit. In exchange, his pregnant mate will be returned safe and sound.” he said, and people exclaimed.

“We have the letter,” I said, “and I have made copies for you to see.”

“May we see it?” Council Woman Joan Clayman said, and Sylvester nodded.

“What use is this council when it fails to do the needful? I think that there are people actively working against my family and me. And because of this, I will be presiding over every decision until further notice.” He said, and they began to murmur.

“That is wrong; our family fought for this together. You might be a Royal, but we all share in this...” Pamela said, and Sylvester nodded.

“That is why I have not ordered the arrest of every council member. I hope you all have no hand in this because it is disturbing that you do not investigate and are quick to condemn and destroy what is mine. My brother would have been sentenced and executed for nothing. I want this council to focus on finding the culprit behind this. My Luna and I know that Jenny was the target of the attack that took her life, not my mother; I want this council to spend their precious time figuring out why. I want this council to reduce my workload for me. If I have to get involved with the investigations, I will water down the council’s power. According to the law, I can do it,” he said, and they were all quiet. I noticed some of them look at me scornfully.

“With all due respect, your Eminence, Lunas are not allowed in the council hall, and they are not allowed to preside over matters. Their duty is to make sure the Volkov bloodline always has an heir. You are not married to this woman yet; it will be advisable to keep her out of our business for now,” Joan said, and I knew what they were implying. I always wondered why Stephanie never came; now I know why.

“Well, not in my Epoch,” Sylvester said and stood up.

“How many of you can boast of having Tamia Riverstorm Albert’s achievements added to their belts? She is a strategist, an analyst, a warrior

and one of the best investigators in our world. If that does not qualify her to sit in this box, observe, interfere and decide over matters, then I don't know what would," he said and sat down.

"I will not repeat myself. Let this be the last time any of you will speak of my Luna as if she is an outsider and an object. I will take it as an insult to my person, and I will not take it easy regardless of your family." He said and sighed.

I looked at them, and they were silent. Some of them looked at me scornfully, except for Vino, who was smiling at me. I returned his smile, and he nodded.

They read the photocopied letter that Sylvester had passed to them, and they were silent. Then Pamela moved to question Bryce, and he was honest. She asked him if anyone was coerced.

"Are you sure you speak the truth, Enforcer?" She asked him, and Bryce kept his head down.

"I feared they would kill my wife and our unborn child. The instructions were clear. I was to get to the Volkov estate so it would seem like I had a meeting with Lord Dominic. I was to go to the East and state that the council sent me under Lord Volkov's orders to collect development tax. I was asked to be rude and threaten the head Alpha of the East, and when I was asked who sent me, I was to tell this council it was lord Dominic Volkov. That is the truth," The man said, and Pamela nodded.

"So, what made you tell the truth?" She asked him.

"My Lord and Lady interrogated me in the council prison and figured out I was lying. I had to give up the pretence and tell the truth," he confessed, and Pamela shook her head.

"Are you sure you were not coerced by Lady Tamia?" She asked, and I would have slapped her if I had been close to her. Suddenly I began to feel the woman loathed me. I wondered what I did to these people.

She was now high on my investigation list. She better be clean, or I would disgrace her and make sure she loses her seat. I will make an example of the bitch. I was pissed off.

I felt Sylvester's hand on my thighs, and he touched it gently and smiled at me.

"Calm down, green eyes," he pleaded with me, and I nodded.

"I wasn't threatened or coerced by my Lady." Enforcer Bryce said, and the woman kept quiet. I thought she would dare to ask if Sylvester coerced him, but she didn't. The bitch.

"Very well then, I doubt there is any need for a trial," Vino said, and people were silent.

"I hereby acquit Dominic Volkov of all the allegations made against him. I also acquit Councilman Larry McMillian Babanins of the suspicion of conniving with Dominic to commit treason." Vino said, and I remembered the Babanins as one of the families that Maurice took out, according to Jake Brighton. I kept a mental note of it.

Some enforcers went to release Dominic and Larry from the chains. Dominic walked away with his head bowed, feeling ashamed. Likewise Larry, but I noticed something while they walked; Dominic kept his distance from Larry. Locked up for a few days, death looming over his head made Dominic rethink certain things.

Soon I saw Dominic come to join us in our box. I was uncomfortable, but he was Sylvester's brother.

"Enforcer Bryce Golubev, you have lied against royalty. You committed an offence that would have cost the man his life. You also misled this council, which is an act of treason. As a result, we sentence you to death by beheading." Vino pronounced with a tinge of anger, and I squeezed Sylvester's lap.

"Do not let them kill him. This will not be the end of people plotting against you. The next person will never tell the truth if Bryce loses his life," I said quickly, and Sylvester stopped the enforcers from taking Bryce away.

"No one is going to die by beheading," Sylvester said comfortably, and Dominic growled. I could understand Dominic's anger, but Bryce had no choice.

“He spoke up and told the truth. He could have also maintained his lie, which would have saved him from punishment. But he told the truth and, in turn, saved my brother and councilman Larry from being

sentenced for treason. As a result, I pardon him and move him to work at the Volkov estate. I would rather surround myself with honest people than connivers,” Sylvester said, and the council murmured.

“The law, your Eminence,” Pamela said, and Sylvester shook his head.

“I choose mercy,” he said, and the woman looked at me. Her eyes showed she knew I was the one that instigated it. I needed to find a way to clip her wings before she became a problem for me. As things were, Vino was the only council member who did not hate me.

~Devin~

I decided to attend Jake’s festival to unwind. It was a last-minute decision. I planned to spend four days in Brighton and then return to Greenwood. It was a great plan. It was supposed to ease my stress and help me think straight.

When I arrived in Brighton in the evening of the festival and Jake told me that Tamia was around, I was giddy. Rex was overjoyed, and I could not believe how easy it would be to take my mate away from Sylvester. Hearing that Sylvester sent her to have a peace talk with Jake unaccompanied made me think of two different extremes.

Either they loved and trusted each other so much that he would allow her to handle state matters without fear, or her life meant nothing. He was willing to gamble it away by using her to apologise to Jake, hoping Jake won’t attack and kill her.

Hearing Jake talk about her made me realise she was alright.

He told me she arrived a bit ill and pale looking, and I was afraid Sylvester maltreated her in the north.

I planned it all.

The rose, the garden. I wanted it to be perfect. I wanted it to be romantic. It is all I have ever wanted. Finding my mate and starting a real life in love and happiness.

Tamia was perfect. I did not care that she was once married or was taken by the wolf lord. I did not care. I just wanted my mate.

Rex hoped to hold her, accept her and claim her. I wasn't going to waste any time.

I was going to run fast and sink my teeth into her.

I did not need to wait for the blue moon; that was only done by chosen mates for the claiming to work.

I did not need the blue moon to claim my mate. The moon goddess had given her to me.

So I used my scent to lure her.

She scented Peach and Wildflowers. Her scent was vivid and more precise than when we first met at the party.

She was delicious, and she was mine. I hoped she would follow, and she did.

When she saw me and tears started streaming down her cheeks, I knew it wouldn't be easy.

Everything she said to me in tears broke my heart. Not because she refused to run into my arms, but because what she was saying was true.

I took my moment with her for granted. I wronged her deeply.

I knew she was hurting with Leo, and I should have challenged him for her hand, but I was diplomatic about it. I made the biggest mistake of my life.

I should have taken her from him that night. I took our moment for granted, and Volkov stole her heart.

I could not blame her for rejecting me. But deep down, she should have given me a chance to prove myself.

No pain or weakness came with the rejection, but the feeling was the same.

I knew she battled her wolf to let me go. As much as I wanted to be persistent, I had to respect her wishes. I lost my chance, and I hated myself for it. Rex did not forgive me for accepting the rejection.

We actually thought she would let us claim her. The feeling was right. It felt so good, and I wanted to sink my teeth into her neck, but she pulled away. I could not force myself on her.

I left Brighton the next day a broken man.

Throughout my journey back to Greenwood, my wolf howled, blaming me for the loss and rejection. He, too, was right.

When I held her in my arms at the party, he urged me to throw away the alliance and challenge Leo for her hand. Her eyes were sad and withdrawn. I should've listened to my wolf, but I didn't.

I wanted the marriage to end naturally because they weren't ready to let each other go, even though Amanda had come between them. I know Leo still feels the same way.

I got home and thought I wouldn't long for her anymore, but I still wanted her. I remembered how it felt to have her in my arms, and I wished things were different and she didn't fall in love with Volkov.

"What will we do now?" Rex asked me, still mourning our loss.

"I do not know, but I think we shouldn't be quick to move on. Tamia does not like to share, and knowing the history of the Volkovs, they always have more than one woman. I plan on waiting a bit to see how things go between them." I told my wolf, and he was silent.

I wasn't going to actively try to separate them, but I was afraid she might lose on his side too. There was no way he could be different from his father. I had to make sure I remained available a little longer for her sake.

"I say we wage war and take her from him. The goddess made her for us. She is ours. He has stolen what is ours," Rex said, and tears streamed down my face.

"She is in love with him, Rex. We can't beat that. The only thing we can do is wait them out. He might slip up, and if he does, I will be there for her, even if it is as a friend, but this can't be it," I said, trying to convince myself there was hope.

My day went slow, and I returned to Greenwood more depressed than I had left.

A day later, I was sitting in my office when Lukman, my beta, brought me an invitation from the Northern Council.

“We hereby invite your pack to partake in our tournament starting next month’s new moon. The open competitions are Polo, Swimming, Football, Golf, Croquet, Volleyball, One Hundred Metre Dash and Ring Fight (without any presence of Silver). Please reply with the list of sports you are interested in and the name of your team members. Thank you, and we look forward to hosting you,” it read, and I looked at the person that sent the invitation.

“From the Northern Council, Signed Joan Clayman. ”

It was strange that the northern council would invite me to participate in the all-region sports games. They usually invite lesser southern Alphas, but they had chosen to invite me this year. I contemplated whether I should accept or not.

“Weirdly, the council would invite us, knowing we have an issue with the lord,” Lukman said. I even had more issues with the Lord because Volkov had stolen the heart of my fated.

“Should we take part in it?” Lukman asked, and I did not know what to say.

Usually, I would say no, but it also meant I would see Tamia one more time before her wedding.

It meant I could officially spend a month in the north without having any hindrances because the tournament takes that long before we complete.

The Polo alone takes two weeks. It would be a great opportunity.

“Do you know if Volkov is participating?” I asked Lukman, and he nodded.

“He plays Polo every year.” He said, and I began to grin from ear to ear.

“Do we have a good Polo team?” I asked him, and he nodded.

“Nikolas Sullivan has a good team. He is a northerner but relocated to the south eleven years ago with his niece. I am sure they would participate in the

north as a southern team against Volkov's team." He said, and I began to grin because this would be an excellent opportunity to spend time with Tamia.

As much as I hated to think of it, she would be around Sylvester often, and if he played Polo, we would be around each other often.

It will give me a chance.

I need to prove that I am a better man for her. I did not plan on playing dirty, but I planned on making an effort. If I still lose, I would gracefully bow out, but I would try as penance for not taking her away from Leo when I had the chance.

Somehow I knew it was my fault she ended up in the north. If I had taken her from Leo, the north would have still attacked the east, but she wouldn't be there to give herself up. She would have been with me.

I looked at Lukman, grateful for the opportunity that had dropped on my lap, and I wasn't going to waste it.

"Ask Nikolas Sullivan to see me in my office. I need to finalise with him and respond to the Northern council as soon as possible before the slots for Polo teams are filled." I told Lukman, and he went to sort the matter.

I waited nervously in my office, grateful for the opportunity.

Knowing the invitation came in late because most Alphas received their invites two weeks ago, it seemed like a last-minute thing. I believed I wasn't meant to be invited, but they chose to invite me for reasons known to them.

I felt it was off that the council would invite me, but it might be their step toward making peace with me. After all, Sylvester had sent Tamia to Brighton to make peace with Jake, and he had somehow made peace with Leo.

Leo never spoke scornfully of the Dark Alpha, and I believe he should because the man took his wife, whom he still loves, but Leo seemed to be okay with it. Volkov might have suddenly realised the errors of their ways and wanted to make amends, or this might also be an attempt to keep his enemies close. I did not know what it may be, but I was on alert. If it was a trap, I had to get out of it. If it weren't for my need to see Tamia again and try to prove myself to her, I would have declined.

Nikolas arrived a few hours later, and he had brought his niece. Lukeman had sent a helicopter to pick him up from Pridewood, where they were staying. It wasn't far, but they would have taken longer to get to Greenwood.

The man looked fit and a bit younger than I imagined. He was in his early forties, and I was sure he could swing a mallet with ease. His niece was a pretty blonde woman, roughly twenty-six or twenty-seven. She was very stunning and had that legendary northern beauty.

I stood up to greet them, and they greeted me with a lot of respect. His niece seemed in awe of me and made me feel like a celebrity.

"Please, make yourselves comfortable," I said, offering them seats, and they sat down.

"To what do we owe this honour, alpha?" Nikolas asked, and I smiled so he would know to relax and that I meant well.

"I heard you have the best Polo team in the south," I said, and the man smiled, trying to be modest.

"We try alpha, but it isn't a popular game in the south as it is in the north," he said, and I nodded.

"I know you relocated here with your niece from the north. I was hoping your team could represent us in the all-region tournament starting next new moon," I said, and the man was stunned. He could not contain his joy.

"It will be an honour. I have been looking for an opportunity to showcase my teams. It will be great," The man said, and I looked at his niece, who seemed to be drooling over me, and I smiled at her.

"You play too?" I asked her, and she nodded.

"Yes, she does, but she won't play at the tournament. She isn't qualified to play at that level; she will just manage the teams," The man said, and I had no clue what it entailed, but it sounded like a good thing.

"How many teams would we enter into the competition?" I asked the man.

"Three. We have only three strong teams in the south," He said, and I nodded.

“Very well then, I will reply and ask them to save three slots for us in the polo tournament. I will need the names of your teams and team members,” I told the man, and he nodded, smiling.

“They will give you a place to rest, and the helicopter will take you back to Pridewood tomorrow,” I said, and the man was excited about it.

I was excited, too, because I had a non-threatening legal reason to be in the north for a whole month. Rex and I were elated, and I relaxed a bit on my couch, hopeful.

~Tamia~

Dominic locked himself in his room for three days after we returned from the council hearing.

I knew it was shame and fear.

Somehow the man did not expect that to happen to him.

I believed realising that he could easily lose his life woke him up.

I wondered how his relationship with Larry would be henceforth.

I knew the council was working against the Volkovs, but we needed to find out who the mastermind was and why, so I decided to start from the beginning.

I went to Sylvester’s office, and he was deep in thought, concentrating on the documents on his desk. Realising some people were actively working against him put him on edge.

Initially, it was based on speculation, but now it was apparent.

Whoever threatened Bryce was either the mastermind or part of the clique.

I looked at him and realised he needed a break.

I had to clear my throat for him to realise I had entered his office. It was either he was far away in his mind or so used to my scent that he did not think I had come in. Either way, he looked up and smiled at me.

“Hey,” he said, and I smiled and looked at him.

“I want to talk to you, but first, let’s go horse riding. I want to go back to the cliff where I can see the alpiners,” I said, and he smiled at me, but his eyes looked tired.

“How about we do that tomorrow, darling? I am busy. Besides, it would be best if you weren’t riding in your condition; I will drive the jeep there. Maybe have a picnic?” he asked, and I laughed.

“But I am allowed to ride you...” I said, and his wolf flashed

“I want us to go now; you need a break, Sylvester. It would help if you unwound so you can think straight. Everyone is going crazy. Marcel and Theodore look like you. Dominic has locked himself inside his room, and your mother is confused. We all need a break, and I want to take it now, with you, at the cliff.” I insisted, and he closed the file on his desk and put it away in a silver safe.

It amazes me how comfortable the northerners were around Silver. They trained with it and used it as storage for essential things. It was mid-bugging. The silver was not in the same space as him but was enclosed in an iron cupboard to prevent it from weakening the people in the room.

Sylvester followed me to the room, and I was glad he listened.

We returned to our bedroom to change our outfits.

“What did you want to tell me other than going to the cliff?” He said, and I smiled at him while I changed into something comfortable.

“I think we should send proper investigators to search Jenny’s house and go through her belongings. Avery, Linda and I can lead it. There are specific things that I am looking for that the people we send might miss, and we are bored sitting doing nothing,” I said, and he was silent; then he went to sit on the bed and started unbuttoning his shirt.

The sight of his bare chest might stop us from making it to the cliff because I was already getting turned on by his stripping gesture alone.

“What are you looking for?” he asked.

“Journals, notes, emails, scribbles, objects...things that can tell a story,” I said, and he took off his shirt, flexing his muscles.

He was so hot that I could no longer concentrate on what I was doing.

I wanted to run my fingers against his chest and feel his muscles. He was mine, all mine, and I wanted him.

“Sylvester,” I asked him, drooling over the sight of his body. He looked at me with a question in his eyes.

“What a hot body you have,” I said to him, and he laughed.

We both laughed; just like that, his spirit was lifted, and his mood was lighter.

“The better to seduce you with, my dear,” He said, and we both laughed because I was playing the role of little red, and he was my big bad wolf.

I could not handle my hormones anymore.

We could talk about Jenny after. But the cliff would have to wait for another day. I went to straddle him on the bed and opened my shirt.

“You need to finish the talk, darling. The wolf desires to eat little red riding hood. Unlike her, I am willing to be devoured,” I said, and he gently touched my tits and sucked them gently in his mouth, swirling his tongue on them.

They were sensitive and hard, and I moaned. I wanted more, something was starving in me, and I needed him to satisfy it.

“I will eat you until you beg me to stop,” he said with a low growl and flipped me onto the bed.

He kissed my neck and nibbled my ears, sucking the lobe and breathing into it. I had goosebumps all over, and my pussy was clenching violently.

“Oh, Sylvester. Please,” I pleaded with him.

My body craved him, aching for his touch, tongue, and cock. My core was aching for release.

He worshipped my body with his mouth and travelled down, sucking and licking my skin, leaving a trail of ecstasy, anticipation, need, desire and want. I dug my nails into the sheet, anticipating him.

“Sylvester,” I moaned, and he kissed my lips but avoided my clit. He was teasing me.

“Ahhh,” I moaned from anticipation and lack of patience.

“I need it now,” I said, trying to press my thighs together to ease the ache.

“Tell me what you want, Tamia,” He growled lowly.

“I want you to eat me until I can take no more, then fuck me until I come all over you,” I said, moaning and writhing under him.

I wasn't a shy woman, and now he knew. I could be vocal when I wanted, and I wanted those things and more.

“Now, Sylvester,” I said, my pussy dripping and anticipating his attention and care.

“Prove to me that you are my big bad wolf,” I said, and he growled and dug in.

He licked my knob and travelled down my slit to my pussy.

“Ahhhhhhhh, Sylvester,” I cried.

I was extra sensitive, and he knew it.

“Do not cum until I tell you to,” He ordered, and I nodded, waiting to see how long I could hold out against his skilful tongue. His skill was unparalleled.

“Sylvester,” I cried, wanting to cum so he could bury himself in me. I wanted to feel his skin against mine. I wanted to wrap myself in his scent.

He worked on me until I could no longer take it.

“Please, Alpha...” I moaned, and he growled with satisfaction.

“Cum,” he linked me.

I released and felt the climax ripple through my veins.

My nerves tingled, and my hair was probably standing.

I felt like my spirit was going to jump out on me, and I stretched, then began to crumble from the over- sensitivity of my clit that he refused to let go of.

Sylvester placed his finger in me, kneaded my walls sweetly, then placed himself in and began to pump.

He pounded into me like a beast. Stretching my walls and satisfying my need for him. Everything was heightened, and I was enjoying it.

I dug my nails into his skin and took it all.

Placing my legs over his shoulder and kneeling between my legs, he pumped viciously, going all the way in.

I saw his teeth elongate and his claws grow out, meaning he was enjoying himself. Knight was trying to take over, and I wanted him to.

He pumped and fought a claim. I shattered all over him, feeling liquid sip out of me. Sylvester finally came and lay by my side. I could see that he was relieved, and I was satiated.

“So you want to play detective?” he said. After we had laid down for forty minutes, I nodded.

“I, too, believe we will find something out in Jenny’s place. Hence why I sealed and guarded her house after her death,” he confessed, and I squealed at him.

“But I can’t let you go there with the ladies,” He said, and I frowned at him. He sat up and sighed.

“You are my life, Tamia. I have never been this much in love in my entire existence, and people know. They know you are my weakness. They know how much I love you because I do not hide it. I can’t, even if I want to,” he said and bowed.

“After what happened with Dominic, I realised people are out to get me and hurt me. They can only hurt me by hurting you and our baby. We will be parents soon, Tamia. I want you protected at all costs. I know you will do an excellent job, tell my men what to look for, and they will bring it, but I can’t let my wife out of my sight,” He said and bent to kiss my lower belly.

“I have wanted this all my life. A mate that genuinely loves my family and me. Now that I have you, I can’t be careless, Tamia. Please. Do not push it. These people are dangerous. They took Bryce’s

pregnant mate. I am not saying you are weak or can’t defend yourself, but they are cunning and unknown. There is nothing more difficult than fighting the unknown,” he said and touched my hand.

“Please, my love, do not argue with me on this one,” he pleaded and kissed my hand.

“I want you to instruct my men, and they will do as you have requested. Share your thoughts with Theodore and Marcel, but I won’t let you play detective. If you are bored, think of something to do for the All-regional games that does not involve you participating in the sports activities,” He said. I knew he needed me to say yes. He was genuinely afraid, and I could see it. So I nodded.

“Basically, what I need are journals, notes however insignificant. If I can’t go, at least let Theodore or Marcel lead the search. Finding these items isn’t the only important thing. How and where they are found matters. It can say a lot and give us more information than the items themselves,” I said, and he sighed.

“Very well, we will all go there. I will not let you out of my sight, Tamia. I won’t.” he said, and laid back down and pulled me close. He sucked on my sweet spot gently.

“I won’t survive if I lose you. If anything ever happens to you, my darling, I will become the Dark Alpha,” he said, and as much as it sounded like a joke, I knew he was serious.

We both fell asleep, and I woke up in the night.

It was nine at night, so I decided to walk to Avery’s wing to check on her. She had been depressed lately, and I knew it was because of my pregnancy.

I knew she feared something was wrong with her, just like I was. I was sure she was alright and would happen soon, but I needed to ensure she was okay.

I left my room barefooted so I don't wake Sylvester. He was sleeping peacefully, and he needed the rest.

While I walked down the halls barefooted, causing me to have stealth, I heard someone whispering on the phone. I did not like eavesdropping, but these were dangerous times, so I leaned closer to listen.

"It is too tight right now; I can't get it for you. You will have to wait and let things loosen up a bit. Maybe during the games," A voice that sounded like Lily said. Then I heard her hang up and approach, so I hid behind a door. She walked out of the corner she was hiding and looked about to be sure the coast was clear before leaving.

I knew women from the harem were not allowed phones, and Sylvester never told me she had special privileges. Whatever she was doing, she was up to no good, and I wondered what she was asked to procure that would need to be done during the games when the security wasn't so tight anymore. I planned on telling Sylvester and having the woman investigated. She was scornful and might try to hurt us for it.

I walked and bumped into Stephanie, the last person I wanted to see.

~Tamia~

Stephanie did not look well. Her eyes were swollen, and her hands were shaking. It was clear that she had been crying.

I wanted to ignore her, but I couldn't. I knew Sylvester wouldn't, so I decided to show some concern.

"Are you alright?" I asked, and she looked at me and shook her head.

"I am not, Tamia. Everything is falling apart. Dominic won't come out of his room. He said he feels like a nobody. I have tried to talk him out of it, but he is too ashamed to let himself mingle," She said, and I nodded.

"You need to give him time, Stephanie. He had a near-death experience. If Bryce had not confessed, he might have been dead by now. He will need time to recover from it," I said, and she hugged me and began to cry.

I did not know what to tell her. So I hugged her in return and patted her back.

“You need to take it easy, Stephanie. Crying won’t fix him. You need to find the things and people that make him happy and try to surround him with them,” I said, and she sighed and bowed.

She looked at me and studied me.

“You will be the Lady of the north soon, Tamia; there are things I need to tell you. Things that I swore to take to my grave but I suspect are part of why all these are happening to my sons,” She said, and I was surprised that she was willing to trust me with her secret.

“Are you sure you want to tell me?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“You will be Luna soon and rule by his side. You’re already doing it, and unlike me, your Alpha loves you and gives you freedom. You take part in council discussions and give advice. None of which I was allowed in my time. You give northern women hope, Tamia.” She said and sighed.

“There are things I need to tell for the sake of the Volkov bloodline. You need to know that you have a Volkov growing inside you. You need to know the truth about Maurice and our children..” She said, and my mind went to what Jake had told me.

Was she planning on telling me the truth, or was she planning on deceiving me like she might have deceived her children?

“Does it have anything to do with what is going on?” I asked, and she paused, looking at me. She was contemplating what to tell me. She was sizing me up, and I wasn’t angry at all.

“It might,” she confessed, and I looked at her.

“I will join you in your room in a few minutes. I want to check on Avery. The hallway isn’t as safe as we think; we might have spies lurking about the place,” I linked her, and she nodded at me.

I still could not shake off Lily’s phone conversation. I could not shake off the fact that I knew she wasn’t supposed to have a phone. I couldn’t shake it off. Something was off, and I planned on figuring it out.

Stephanie walked past me, heading to her room while I headed towards the Beta's wing to see Avery. I would have checked on Linda too, but I knew she and Marcel went on a date.

I got to Avery's door and knocked.

"It's open," I heard Avery say, and I gently let myself in. I saw my friend sitting on a couch and working on an embroidery piece. I looked at the leaf design she was weaving into the fabric and realised that her skill had improved, but she was still marring the fabric.

"Tamia, you and Sylvester missed dinner," She said, and I nodded and sat beside her.

"How are you feeling?" I asked, and she sighed.

"I feel nervous," She said, and I wondered why.

"Why?" I asked, and she sighed and put down her supposed artwork, which was more of a cluster and an honest attempt at being creative.

"I have wanted babies for as long, but when Michelle came into our lives, it became a tall dream. Now I found love again. Marcel and I started trying before you and Sylvester got together. Then Linda and Theodore got together," She said and bowed her head and began to weep.

"Yet I am still waiting in line, Tamia. I waited in line with Max, and I believe that was why Michelle got the best of him, and now here I am with Marcel," she said, and I moved close to her and rubbed her back.

"Do not be afraid, Avery; it will happen for you, too," I said, rubbing her back.

"But when?" She asked, and I sighed.

"You should see a doctor to know if anything is wrong and if it can be corrected. That is what I would do," I said, and she broke the hug and stared at me.

"You are right, Tamia," She said and held my hand.

"Join me at the hospital tomorrow, please," She said, and I remembered my conversation with Sylvester about protection and not being on my own.

“I suggest you go with Marcel. It would be best if you handled it together,” I said, and she shook her head.

“I want you to come with me, Tamia. I do not want Marcel. What if something is wrong with me? He will know and might change his mind. I love him, Tamia; I can’t lose him,” She said with genuine fear in her eyes.

“Nothing is the matter with you, Avery. I will speak to Sylvester to let me follow you to the hospital,” I said to ease her mind, and she thanked me.

I tried to counsel her to the best of my ability and decided to leave because I did not want to keep Stephanie waiting.

My actions might have seemed a bit stupid. Whatever Stephanie wanted to tell me must have been serious, so it was wrong to put her on hold, but I knew that whatever she was going to tell me might leave me shellshocked, and I won’t be able to check on my friend, so I wanted to get it out of the way before speaking to Stephanie.

I walked still barefooted so people could not hear my footsteps. I took a mental note to do this often. Lily was on my watch list. I needed to know who gave her a phone and who she was communicating with.

I got to Stephanie’s door and knocked.

“Please come in, Tamia; I know it is you,” She said, and I let myself in.

“Lock the door,” She said, and I did as she said and approached her where she sat on the couch in her room.

I went to sit with her, and she smiled at me. I was still wary of her, but I let it be because she was open to me again. There were only two possibilities: to misguide or tell the truth, so I was attentive.

“I am sorry to ask you this question, but I need you to be honest. How did it feel when Leo met his fated?” She asked, and I looked at her. I contemplated answering it, but I knew I had to, or the conversation won’t make headway.

“Heartwrenching. My life was over. He was the lead alpha of the East; I had nowhere to go, and no one would want me. I could not leave, so I was there

through it all until the north attacked and gave me a chance to escape,” I said, and she looked at me stunned.

“Yes, I gave myself as a tribute to leave Leo. We would have subdued the people who attacked us, but I did not want to be the third wheel in their home anymore. They were going to be a family. There was no place for me,” I said, and she looked at me worried, but I smiled at her.

“I am glad,” I said and placed my hand on my belly. “I found love in the north and everything I ever wanted.” I told her, and she smiled.

“Do you know if Leo were Sylvester, then truly you would have nowhere to go? Sylvester is a step up from Leo, but no one is a step up from the Wolf lord. So, in that case, you will be stranded forever, and even if you want to leave him, it would be impossible. Society won’t allow it, your family won’t allow it, and your heart and wolf will hold on so tight, and it won’t allow it. There is something in us that seeks the dominant male,” She said, and I wondered why she was saying such things.

“I didn’t call you here to discuss your relationship.” She said and sighed. I called you here to discuss mine.

“Something my sons did not know was that their father had a fated,” she said, and I exclaimed, pretending not to know so she could give me her version of the story.

“Everyone that knew was sworn to secrecy by Maurice. Her name was Alissa Pavlishchev, and she was from Gad in the western region. Only the people in the council and older western Alphas knew of her.” She said.

“Maurice loved me wholeheartedly until he met her. He never slept with anyone. Like Sylvester is with you, my husband was that way with me. Maybe not exactly, but you get the picture,” she said, and her eyes welled up in tears.

“I loved Maurice with all my heart, and I thought our lives would be rosy, but I was wrong. He met Alissa and took her as his mistress. My family and the council did not let him claim her because that would insult me, so he slept with her and made me endure unimaginable pain. The woman wasn’t a saint, either. They never are. It is not by choice but by design. No fated would want to be a mistress. They see us as taking their space, so they would do anything to replace us fully and not share their mate.

She plotted against me and manipulated my husband.

She was the one that made him start the war frenzy. When my family and part of the council pushed back, Maurice moved to eliminate them to make her Lady and his Luna; I had given up hope. I had Dominic then, and he wasn't an Alpha, so I knew my days with Maurice were numbered. When she got pregnant, I left the estate and returned home with Dominic. Maurice did not look for me. He doted on her and loved her, but he never claimed her. The woman was so wicked that her people refused to come and work in the estate to help her. If you think I am lying, you can investigate. Because of this, Maurice forced me to return and be her midwife. I was maltreated and abused. He would beat me because of her and her lies, and she never ran out of lies. I was tired. If it was a lesser Alpha, I could run, but who would challenge the wolf lord for my sake? I knew I wouldn't be able to leave until he let me go.

The goddess took pity on me and she died giving birth to her son. Maurice lost his mind. First, he said I poisoned her and had me locked up in a cell, but it was proven that she died of a dangerous case of preeclampsia. I was released and asked to care for the child, but I refused. I told Maurice I would not touch his bastard because that was what the boy was. Maurice felt guilty for locking me up, so he did not try to force me to care for the child. Soon he found out all the lies she told about me. When the boy turned one, Maurice found out he had an Alpha wolf, so he sent him to Grizlo in the north to be cared

for by a small family. Around that time, I was pregnant with Sylvester, but things weren't the same. Although Maurice loved me, the loss of his mate destroyed him, and he found himself drawn to women of the west who looked like her, so he started actively keeping a harem. He conquered the entire west for other reasons but took their women so he could replace Alissa briefly. I handled it well, had Sylvester, and when Maurice found that Sylvester was an Alpha, his love for me increased, and Alissa and her son faded away." She said and looked at me.

"That boy's name is David Pavlishchev. Maurice did not give him his last name because he was a bastard." She concluded, and I was in shock.

"That bastard was why I left here, Tamia. I went to see if I could find out about his whereabouts because he was the only one that would want to kill my sons. He is the only one who will have something to gain from this. Dominic and Sylvester do not know of his existence. I told Dominic yesterday, he didn't

take it well. That is why I am telling you this so you can help me tell Sylvester. We need to find David and be sure he isn't behind all this. I do not have proof; I am just speculating, but I know you are good with investigations. I will need you to carry one out for me and figure it out," She said, but I was too dumbfounded to respond.

~Tamia~

Shock could not describe how I felt after Stephanie had told me everything.

I sat on the couch and stared at her, speechless.

"Why are you trusting me with this level of information, Luna Stephanie?" I asked her, and she wiped away her tears.

Going down memory lane was hard for her, and I could see she loved her husband dearly, just like I loved Leo, and I wouldn't have let him go.

To be fair to her, I could understand her predicament, which was why I had to let Devin go when he came to me.

I couldn't be selfish and crush the one person that dared to love me through my pain.

My heart truly belonged to Sylvester. I was lucky.

Stephanie did not have a Sylvester that would sweep her off her feet and rescue her, so she had to deal, but hearing her open up to me like this made me afraid.

I wasn't her best person; in fact, there was friction between us, and I doubted it would change. For her to tell me this meant she was desperate.

I tried to remain calm while I waited for her to respond.

"I think he is behind this, Tamia," she said and bowed.

"He might feel cheated. He is an Alpha, and he is older than Sylvester. If he weren't a bastard, he would have been the lord of the north. I am sure he knows I am the reason Maurice could not marry his

mother properly,” she said, and I wondered if she was speaking from knowledge and not just a hunch. There was no way she wouldn’t know what was going on in this David’s mind if she wasn’t privy to it.

I looked at her for a bit.

“Are you sure about these things?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“I can’t lie about this,” She responded, and I wanted to beg to differ, but I held my tongue.

“You know if I tell Sylvester about this man, he will hunt him down, and there will be no going back from this,” I said and sighed.

“Are you sure he is a threat to my mate?” I asked her, letting her know Sylvester was my first concern, and she nodded. I smiled because I had her right where I wanted her.

“In that case, I need you to come clean about it. Tell me how you are so sure this man is a threat?” I asked her, and she looked at me and nodded her head.

“I do not know how to explain it, Tamia, but I just have a hunch. At least let us find him, and then we will know what to do from there,” She explained, and I understood what she wanted from me.

Stephanie wasn’t sure of her hunch, and she knew Sylvester would not have a subtle approach, and his approach could aggravate this David. She wanted me to tell Sylvester about David and make sure he is subtle about it.

“Very well then..” I said, and just then, I heard Sylvester’s voice in my head.

“Where are you?” He said, and I knew he had woken up and wondered where I had gone.

I got off the couch and looked at my barefoot.

“On my way back to you, darling,” I linked with him, and he was quiet.

“I have to go back,” I told Stephanie, and she nodded and looked at me.

"I am truly happy for both of you. I know it may not seem so, but I am. I am also begging you not to break his heart, Tamia. Susan left my baby wounded, which is why I have been uptight. Please." She said and looked at my tummy.

"I am sure you two will make a great family," She said, and I smiled at her.

"I cannot hurt him, Stephanie, and he knows it. I love him with everything I am, and I have turned my back on everything just to be with him. My love and heart are in his hands. I hope he does not break me," I said, and she could not speak.

I did not owe her the explanation that I had rejected my fated for his sake. That was to remain between Sylvester and me, but she needed to know that I was in my relationship a hundred per cent, and I did not plan on ever letting my man go.

I hugged her and assured her everything would be alright before leaving her room and heading towards mine. I bumped into Lilly on my way, and she looked at my foot.

One thing I noticed was she was lurking around our corridors too much. I know Sylvester was easy on her, but this wasn't her wing.

"Good Evening, Luna," She said to me, already according me the respect of Luna.

"Hello, Lilly," I said, and she looked at my barefoot.

"Is that because you are pregnant?" She asked me with a tinge of jealousy, and I smiled.

"No, dear, it is so I can sneak around the place unnoticed," I said and walked away from her.

I felt her eyes on me, and I turned to wink at her.

I wanted her relaxed and a little bit on edge simultaneously. She was bound to make mistakes faster when on edge than when relaxed.

"I entered the room and went to bed. Sylvester wrapped his arm around me and kissed my neck.

"The bed was cold," he said, and I turned to look at him.

“Since when did a cold bed start troubling you?” I asked, wanting to laugh.

“When you started sleeping in it, Tamia,” He said in his low deep voice, and it made me shiver in a good way. Sylvester knew how to turn me on, and this was one of those.

He came on top, and I knew the night would be longer than expected.

We had breakfast in the morning with our friends, and Sylvester brought up the investigation.

“I will want us to go through the things in late Jenny’s house,”

Sylvester said, and Marcel looked at him.

“Have you told the Lawrences about it? Especially Vino. She might be occupying a Babanin seat, but she is still his aunt.” Marcel said, and I was a bit surprised that Jenny was Vino’s aunt, but the name was a dead giveaway. She was Jenny Lawrence; I just thought she was a different Lawrence. In light of this, things were a bit confusing in my head.

“I do not need permission, especially when I am trying to figure out why she was killed,” Sylvester said, and Marcel nodded.

“Sign me up,” Linda said immediately, and Theodore looked a bit pissed at her.

I understood why she committed herself quickly because she knew he would try to stop her because of the pregnancy.

“Are you sure it is the best way to go?” Marcel asked Sylvester, and he nodded.

“I knew my mother wasn’t the target of that attack. Jenny might have been involved in something or known something to be eliminated.” Sylvester said, and Marcel sighed.

“What about the wire transfers that Lily was working on? Does it show any funds leading to or from Jenny? We have to check everything knowing that your father almost wiped them out.” Marcel asked.

“They should lead somewhere,” Marcel added, and I remembered her phone call and contemplated bringing it up.

“All those anonymous transfers lead to the south, and now some are going east. I have asked Lily to take a break. I cannot leave her with a computer unattended, and I want to spend time with Tamia. So I will find another way to trace the transfers,” Sylvester said and touched my hand. He kissed it, making my body shake.

“I am worried that some people are stationing people in the east and west. With what has happened recently, I hope an attack that would be blamed on the north will not ensue. We are yet to understand why the transfers and the people they are going to are anonymous. I can't shake off the fact that everything is directed at destroying my family. The fact that my father had many enemies does not help matters either. I am thinking of reaching out to the distant Volkovs for help,” He confessed, and I touched his hand.

“Very well, what time do we go to Jenny's house, and how many of us are going?” Theodore asked. Sylvester smiled and kissed my hand again.

“See it more like a date because we are bringing our mates with us,” he said, and Marcel shook his head.

“Avery and I have a doctor's appointment this morning,” He said, and Sylvester shrugged.

“Go and return. Pending on what the doctor says will determine whether or not Avery will be coming,” He said, and Marcel nodded and thanked him.

After the serious discussion, we returned to our food, and Sylvester could not keep his hands off my body. He got me all worked up that I might have gone on top of him in that room.

He breathed in my scent and ensured his pinewood scent surrounded me. He nibbled my ears and sucked on my sweet spot.

“My mark will be there soon, darling. You will be truly mine,” He linked me, and a faint moan escaped my lips. The room was a bit blurry, and he was getting me worked up.

“I am already yours,” I linked him back, and I felt his tongue brush through, making my body shiver and the hairs on my skin stand because of the goosebumps his action produced.

“Sylvester..” I moaned, and he placed a grape in my mouth, allowing his finger to enter my mouth. I sucked on it to let him know the work I could do to his cock. He felt it because Knight growled, and Kaira purred in my head.

“You two should get a room,” I heard someone say, but I was too far gone to know who did. It was between Linda and Avery.

We finished breakfast, and Sylvester and I returned to our bedroom.

I was wet and horny, but at the same time, I needed to tell him about Lily.

We entered the room, and he rushed at me, ready to take me. As much as I wasn't selfish, he had ignited a fire that needed attention, so I let him go to work on my body.

It was a passion-filled morning, and I confessed to all sorts of things.

He made me say something that I wouldn't have on a typical day while hitting the right spot; with his intoxicating scent and the love I felt in my heart, I could promise him the moon, which wasn't mine to give by the way, but I could hypothetically give it to him because he had taken me there and back and he knew it.

We lay on the bed tired, with my head against his chest. I kissed his chest, and he touched my back gently.

I thought of the few times I heard of him while I was in the east.

If anyone told me he would be the love of my life back then, I wouldn't believe them, but the funny part was there was no day that I judged or resented him. It helped me decide to come to the north, and I was glad I did.

“I need to talk to you about something,” I said, and he made both of us sit so he could look into my eyes. He looked worried, so I smiled at him to be calm.

“Are the women in the Harem allowed to have cell phones?” I asked him, and he froze.

“I can't let them have cell phones, Tamia; that will defeat the purpose of keeping them in check. They can also betray the north and easily sell information that way,” he said, placing his hand on my cheek. He thought I wanted him to give them cell phones. It was cute.

“I know you are a kind woman, but please do not ask me to give them a phone. Please do not ask me to endanger the north.” He said, and I shook my head and kissed his hand on my cheek by turning towards it. I used my hand to gently hold his palm against my face and closed my eyes to relish the feeling.

“I need you to act rational and wisely about what I am about to tell you. Promise me you won’t lose your shit,” I said, and he looked confused.

“Last night, I decided to check on Avery in her wing, so I left barefoot, knowing my attempt to wear something on my feet would wake you up. While I walked down the hallways, I heard a voice. I hid behind the door to listen; it was Lily talking on a phone. She told someone that things were a bit tight and she couldn’t get something for the person and that the person should wait until during the all-region game when security is loose,” I said, and I saw rage rise in his eyes. Sylvester looked like he was about to kill someone, and I hoped it was nothing for Lily’s sake.

~Sylvester~

I could not believe what Tamia had just told me about Lily.

I was so mad that I knew Knight could emerge.

I looked at my mate, and she did not seem like she was joking.

From the look in her green eyes, it took a lot of effort for her to tell me what she had just divulged.

I raised my hand, patted her head gently, and then kissed her lips. It was more to calm myself down than to tell her I was okay.

I knew I needed to be calm to handle the matter.

Lily was a big problem. If she was betraying me, then I was in trouble because she knew of my investigations, and she was helping me with one of them.

What if she was giving out the information to someone else?

I had always suspected I couldn’t trust her, but when she came, she was innocent-looking, and I thought I could have the younger sister I never had.

I revoked her privileges when I heard all the awful things she did to the women in the harem.

I did not want to jump to conclusions, but I wanted to get up and go and find out the truth.

I was about to get up when Tamia stopped me with her hand.

“I have not finished talking to you, darling. Please be calm. I hope there is a rational explanation for what I heard and saw,” She said, and I searched her eyes, my soul pleading, hoping that whatever she

needed to tell me next would be easy to digest.

“Here goes,” She said and sighed.

“After the incident with Lily, I bumped into your mother.” She said, and I held my tongue. I did not want to say anything that would change the topic.

” She was crying, and she requested to speak to me immediately. Of course, I went to see Avery and then returned to your mother’s room.” She said and squeezed my arm.

“Your mother explained why she left the estate in a hurry that day Dominic was arrested, and what she went to do,” she said.

“According to her, your father had a fated called Lady Alissa Pavlishchev,” She continued, and I exclaimed. Tamia just nodded gradually and continued what she was saying.

“Your father accepted his fated and made your mother share. She did not have you then, and when the woman was pregnant, your mother left with Dominic. Things happened, and your mother was asked to return to care for her. All the while, he tried to divorce your mother, but her family was too important for him to divorce her successfully, so he started conquering the council families and the west. He wanted to own the world and be powerful enough to overthrow the council and marry this woman. According to your mother, the woman was evil and did many mean things. Eventually, she died giving birth to her son. This was relieving to your mother, but that was the beginning of your father growing his harem and getting involved with the women in the harem. He only went for women of western descent because they reminded him of his fated. Your father realised the boy was an Alpha, so

he tried to get your mother to take care of the baby, but she said no, so he sent the boy to be cared for. She got pregnant with you, and everything became rosy after she gave birth to you, and he discovered you were an Alpha too.” She said and searched my eyes for emotions, but I made sure there was nothing in them so she would have the confidence to tell me the rest.

“When your mother left, it wasn’t an act of defiance, but to find David Pavlishchev, your half-brother, because she believed he might be the culprit. He has so much to gain if anything happens to either of you,” she said, and I knew she was right.

“Did my mother tell you his last known location?” I asked, and she shook her head.

“Very well, I will handle it,” I said, and she smiled.

She laid down a bit, and I held her in bed until she fell asleep.

It was time to go to the only part of the mansion I never visit. The Harem. I linked Theodore to meet me there with two women from my staff.

I kept my anger under control and moved swiftly.

When I got to the common hall of the harem, the entire place was silent. I had never visited there since the women had been brought. The last I was there was when we were actively involved with the former women in the harem before I let all of them go.

Marcel, Theodore and I threw orgies there and partied all night long. Thinking of the life I led back then; I was ashamed of myself and grateful that Tamia brought meaning and love back into my life because Susan left with everything, and I was nothing but an empty shell.

Most of the ladies were looking at me seductively, and I ignored them. My eyes searched and found Lily, who smiled at me.

I motioned her to come to me, and she approached eagerly.

“Take me to your bedroom,” I said, and I heard some women gasp. I knew what they were thinking, but I did not owe anyone any explanation.

We waited for Theodore to join us before leaving. I could see the giddiness in Lily's eyes, and I remained silent.

"I hope Luna Tamia won't be mad about this Alpha. I do not want to anger luna," She said with a sly tone, and I wanted to hit her, but I controlled myself. If what Tamia said checked out, she would have betrayed me beyond repair. I was holding my temper.

"What is going on?" Theodore linked me.

"Be attentive," was all I could manage, and he was silent.

We got to Lily's room which she shared with two other girls, and I entered.

The room was beautifully furnished, and three beds were placed in it. Beside each bed was a vanity table. It looked like a luxurious hostel, which was the point, and Lilly stood with her head bowed.

I knew what she was thinking, and she began to undo her tunic to confirm my suspicion. I could feel her joy and expectation. I had never given her the sign that I wanted anything sensual with her, but I knew it was a fantasy in her head, and it almost cost me my relationship with Tamia.

"Keep your clothes on," I ordered quietly. She looked confused but nodded.

"I am at your service, Alpha," She said with her head bowed.

"Where is your bed?" I asked, and she eagerly pointed to the bed close to the wall. I linked the women that came with us to search through her things.

Lily became apprehensive immediately.

"What is going on, Alpha?" She said, looking worried.

"Hold her, Theodore," I told my Gamma, and he did as I had said.

"Where is the phone, Lily?" I asked her and her eyes widened.

"Do not bother lying because people told me you have one. Where did you put it?" I asked her, and she bowed her head and began to sob.

“Where is it!” I yelled, feeling my anger bubbling to the surface at the realisation that there was indeed a phone and Tamia was right.

“Inside the mattress under my bed,” She confessed. The women lifted her mattress, and there the phone was.

They brought it to me, and it had no number and no messages, but the call log had an anonymous caller on it. The person was wise to hide their caller identity when calling.

“How did you get this?” I asked her calmly, and she sobbed. I tried to hold my temper because I knew I could kill her.

“What have you given them?” I asked her, and she continued to cry.

“Answer me!” I yelled with my authority, and she shook.

She struggled and broke away from Theodore and went on her knees.

“I am sorry, Alpha. I am sorry. They promised I would go home but threatened they would wipe my family out if I did not comply,” she said without answering my question.

“Do not test my patience, Lily. What did you give them, and who were you speaking to?” I asked her, and she began to sob.

“They did not give me a name. Sometimes it was a woman and sometimes a man,” She said, and I grabbed her neck and squeezed.

“What did you give them?” I asked, angry.

“Sylvester?” I heard Tamia’s voice in my head, and I cursed under my breath because I wasn’t expecting her to be awake.

“Sylvester?” I heard her voice again, and I released Lilly’s neck.

“Yes, darling, I am in Lily’s room; you are right,” I said, and she did not reply. I knew she was on her way.

“What did you give them?”

“Banking details, signatures, royal seals, envelopes, and I placed a backdoor on your computer to help them monitor what you were doing,” She said quickly, and I slapped her.

She fell to the ground. I was enraged.

Chapter 53 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna

~Sylvester~

When Theodore interrupted my speech at the northern council conference, I knew something serious had happened.

I politely excused myself. I went to him.

I could hear people murmuring, but soon, Marcel took over, and they were silent.

That was why it was best I wrote my speeches. He just picked up from where I left off.

Theodore stood when I approached him.

“They are back,” He said, and I smiled, glad that Tamia had returned.

I was worried she might see Leo or Devin, and they would convince her to leave with them.

The painful part of that fear was that I wouldn't have gone after her if she had willingly followed. Otherwise, I would have given my mother, Dominic and the entire council the war they had longed for and burned the south or east to the ground.

“Tamia is ill. Linda asked that I send a doctor, which I did, but then she insisted I tell you. I think it is serious,” He said, and images of her being poisoned by Jake Brighton just to get at me flooded my mind.

I was out the door before Theodore could finish the sentence.

People were looking at me weirdly.

The moment I stepped out, I hopped into the first car I saw. It wasn't mine, but I was lord, and the driver was already behind the wheel.

"Volkov estate now!" I ordered him, and he started his vehicle.

I did not know who he worked for; I will have to apologise later.

We arrived at the estate, and I rushed into the building and went straight to my room.

Avery and Linda were with her. She looked pale and sweaty but seemed a bit calm. The doctor was examining her, and I went to hold her hands. Knight was afraid, so I had to try and control myself.

When the doctor congratulated me that she was pregnant, I was shocked. Knowing that Linda did not feel the same way made me still worried that Jake did something.

"Linda is pregnant, and she isn't ill?" I asked the doctor.

"People experience pregnancy differently, but I will still take her blood sample to test for other things. If there is anything, she is already recovering from it. I will give her a mild sedative to help her relax and sleep it off, but there is no cause for alarm here. She will be alright when she wakes up; she just needs to rest," he said, administered the sedative, and packed his things to leave.

I watched Tamia's eyes close gradually until she fell asleep.

Linda and Avery excused themselves, and I stayed with her.

There was a knock on my door thirty minutes later, and I rushed to open it so the person did not bang too hard and wake Tamia up. I knew it was my mother. She was the only one that dared to do that.

I opened the door, and she frowned at me. Not wanting her in my room, I stepped outside.

"What is wrong with her?" She asked, and I knew she must have heard.

"What do you care?" I said, and she sighed and bowed her head.

"I know I misbehaved the last time, and I am sorry. It was just that treason is a serious crime, and I knew they would want to kill Dominic. Tamia threatened

to deal with Dominic if he caused you trouble. You are a fool for her. I was angry, but I don't hate her. I just went to my family home to calm down and think things through." She said, and I knew she was being honest, but Tamia wasn't comfortable with her anymore, and that was a relationship she would have to fix alone.

"Your words and actions hurt her, mother. Even though she didn't say it, I could see it. You called her a whore, among other things; words like that don't get forgotten," I said, and she bowed.

"Do you know she was the only one that believed Dominic didn't do it? She was the one that urged me to dig instead of passing judgment. Dominic has been a problem for me, so it was easy to think he would pull off that stunt. It was Tamia that made me question the enforcer. She was the one that made me look at other factors, yet you were busy antagonising her and making her feel inadequate. I am disappointed in you, mother. Anyone looking from the outside would say you didn't birth me with how you acted. You always side with him over me; you never have my back," I said, tears streaming down her face.

"Do not say that, Sylvester. I gave birth to both of you. I threatened to disown him if he went for the hearing. That was why he stayed. I also say hurtful things to Dominic, but I have to feel sorry for him. He is the older of you two, yet he has nothing, no position, no charge and respect. Things like that get to people. You have it all, Sylvester; he has nothing. He has to live in your shadow for the rest of his life. It is not your fault, but I know it gets to him, so he is always eager to prove that you are flawed so he can feel better. Larry has worked on his insecurities and used them. I was happy you locked the douchebag up. I gave birth to both of you. Do not ever think otherwise," She said and bowed her head.

"I am sorry about Tamia, but I am really concerned for her. I knew she went to the west because of you. It was a brave thing to do on her part, and I commend her, but I am concerned. Jake isn't vindictive, but I can't say the same for Donald Brighton. He is the next alpha, and he has a grudge against this family. Just like Devin, his mother was taken by your father," she said and looked around us.

I realised she wanted to tell me other things people weren't supposed to hear, so I opened the door to my room and let her in.

I signalled her to keep it down, and she looked at Tamia, where she was sleeping.

“She is pale,” She said with concern, and I nodded.

“Doctor said she will be fine,” I said, and she looked at me.

“Do you mind if I examine her?” She asked, and I did not know how Tamia would feel about it, but since I was there, I decided it wouldn't be any harm.

She touched Tamia's forehead and palm and checked her nails; Tamia stirred in her sleep but did not wake up.

“Did the doctor take a blood sample?” She asked, and I nodded.

“I think she ingested a small amount of poison, and I also think she is pregnant,” she said, and I was panicked because she could be right.

“No need for alarm; her system is fighting whatever was introduced into it,” She said and patted her hair gently.

“She is pregnant,” I confirmed, and she gasped. A wide grin spread across her face.

“Congratulations,” she said softly and looked at Tamia lovingly.

“I hope she will give me another chance.” She said, and I doubted Tamia would be that nice again, but I kept it to myself.

“You were going to tell me something about Donald Brighton, mother,” I said, and she nodded. We moved to the couch area, and she sat.

“Yes, Ava Brighton. A bitch ...” she said scornfully.

“She and Gretchen were brought as trophies. Gretchen was Jake's younger sister. She was stunning and a looker. Your father eagerly drafted her to join his harem and reluctantly drafted Ava. He favoured Gretchen of all his bedmates, and Ava got jealous. Gretchen thought she was being nice when she pleaded with Maurice to send her sister In-law back to her husband, and Maurice considered it. I hated that bitch because she almost took my husband from me. Ava did not see it as an act of kindness on her part. She saw it as a way of reducing her competition. The bitch thought Maurice liked her too, and Gretchen was only trying to get rid of her. So she pleaded with Maurice to

remain in his service and continue to warm his bed,” She said and wiped away her tears.

It was clear that my mother’s selective memory was her coping mechanism.

Sometimes she would say he had to sleep with those women to learn their husband’s secrets and be ahead of them, but here she was admitting that his method was fucked up, but I held my tongue.

“Ava murdered Gretchen in cold blood, driving a silver blade through her heart in this room,” she said, looking around.

“She had come to plead with Maurice to let her say, and instead of finding Maurice, she found Gretchen in his bed naked, looking freshly fucked, and she snapped. You see, Maurice had stopped touching Ava, and it bothered her,” she said and bowed her head.

“Maurice had her locked up in the dungeon, and one drunken night, he went to her cell and took her life,” she said, and I was stunned.

“What he did was against the law. Ava was supposed to stand trial for her crime, slave or not. But he acted on impulse, and we swept it under the carpet. No one knew this, but Donald hates the Volkovs because of it. He thinks his mother was brought here as a slave and killed unjustly. I doubt Jake knows the truth,” She said, and I looked at Tamia.

“Our family has many enemies, hence why the rest of the Volkov bloodline are quiet and not bearing our last name. It was wrong to send her to Brighton. I am sure they wanted to kill her. She just didn’t ingest enough,” she said, and I hoped for Jake’s sake there was nothing in Tamia’s blood or I would destroy Brighton.

“Is there a record of this?” I asked her, and she nodded.

” The recordkeeper kept a record,” She told me, and I nodded, hoping to use it when the time comes.

“The council have sent enforcers for Dominic’s hearing. They want to move him and Bryce to the council prison,” Theodore said through the mind link, and I got up immediately.

“What is the matter, son?” My mother asked, and I shook my head. I dared not tell her what was happening.

“Council matters,” I said, and she nodded.

“I will take my leave. Tamia likes yoghurt and fruits. She also likes smoked salmon in her salad. I will have the kitchen staff prepare her favourite so she can eat when she wakes up; she has lost some weight.” My mother said, and I thanked her.

We both left the room.

Although I knew she meant no harm, I did not want her to be the first person Tamia would see when she woke up.

I linked Avery and Linda to go to my room and be with Tamia, then headed to the dungeons where the enforcers were waiting.

Marcel was there, and Dominic stood in chains with fear in his eyes.

“What is the meaning of this?” I asked, and the leader bowed his head.

“Your Eminence, Councilwoman Pamela asked us to transfer the suspects to the council prison so they can stand trial tomorrow,” He said, and I nodded.

“They will stand trial tomorrow; tell her I will be presiding over the case, and the prisoners will remain in my custody until then. Now leave,” I said. I knew it wasn’t my place, but I was going to bend the rules for Dominic’s sake. Someone wanted him to be the fall guy, and I wasn’t going to allow it.

“With all due respect, my lord, the council decides on criminal matters,” he said, and I nodded.

“Then tell them I am overriding the decision this time. If they have an issue, they should face me directly on the matter,” I said, and the man nodded, saluted me with respect and left.

“What is with the council? Why are they quick and eager to convict Dominic,” Marcel said, and I looked at my brother.

“Someone is desperate to cover their tracks by making him the fall guy,” I said, and there was hope in Dominic’s eyes.

“What?” Marcel said.

“Tamia and I have been digging, and we found some really troubling things. They were hoping I wouldn’t investigate because of the friction between Dominic and me. They were right, had Tamia not insisted, I would have let them deal with him,” I said and looked at Dominic, who looked ashamed of himself.

“You did this to yourself, big brother. Always working against me and trying to prove that I am incompetent. You would have been the fall guy for nothing.” I said, and he remained ashamed.

“Double Bryce and Dominic’s security. I do not want a mishap,” I linked Marcel and Theodore, and they nodded.

I returned to my room to be with Tamia.

~Tamia~

Everyone was elated by the news except for Sylvester. I could see he was happy, but he squeezed my hand gently.

“Thank you, doctor, but why is she ill? Linda is pregnant, and she isn’t ill,” He said, and I could understand his reaction to the news.

“People experience pregnancy differently, but I will still take her blood sample to test for other things. If there is anything, she is already recovering from it. I will give her a mild sedative to help her relax and sleep it off, but there is no cause for alarm here. She will be alright when she wakes up; she just needs to rest,” He said.

“I will administer a mild sedative to help her rest”, he added.

The doctor administered the medication and left. Leaving Sylvester, Avery and me in the bedroom.

My eyes became heavy, and I fell asleep.

I woke up to see Sylvester lying beside me in bed and working on his computer. I groaned, and he looked at me and smiled.

He put his computer on the nightstand and kissed my forehead.

“If you were a child, I would have said you were grounded,” He said with a tinge of anger, and I understood.

His eyes were teary, and he was fighting his emotions.

“Anything could have happened to you out there, Tamia. Anything. Why would you keep something so significant from me?” He asked, and I gradually sat up.

“Had I told you I was throwing up and feeling feverish, you would not have allowed me to go, and I did not trust the council to do your bidding in the west,” I said, and he bowed his head and then looked at me.

“How are you feeling now?” He asked and placed his hand gently on my belly.

His touch felt good against my skin, and I wanted his hand to linger.

Kaira was silent because she was ashamed of what we did and what she almost allowed to happen. I understood her shame.

“Don’t do this again. Always tell me what you are going through, Tamia. We will get through it together no matter how terrible it is,” He said, and I nodded.

“So we will be parents soon,” he said with a broad grin, and I smiled at him.

I felt like shit.

How would I tell him I saw Devin and we made out? How would I tell him he was my fated, but I rejected him? How?

“Please don’t,” Kaira pleaded with me, afraid.

I understood her fear because making out with Devin and almost allowing him to claim us felt like a great betrayal.

“How were things over there?” he asked, and I told him everything Alpha Jake told me about the attack.

He took off his shirt and snuggled into bed beside me to hold me.

I felt at peace when he wrapped his arms around me and enveloped me with his scent. I held him resting my head on his chest, and looked up at him.

"I love you, Sylvester. Please don't break my heart," I said in tears, and he frowned. He was surprised at my sudden mood.

"I can never hurt you, Tamia," He said and placed my hand on his chest to feel his heartbeat.

"I cannot live without you." He said.

"If your fated shows up, what would you do?" I asked, and he sat up gently. I gently sat up, too, and he looked at me.

"I make my destiny, Tamia, and I choose you and our baby. She would have shown up late. I have given everything to you, Tamia; I have nothing to give her," he said, and I bowed my head, knowing how strong the pull was and how Leo failed.

Devin was a gentleman, unlike Amanda, who was persistent. Devin respects my wishes; what if his fated is like Amanda, persistent?

"What if the pull is so strong and you can't say no?" I asked him, tears streaming down my face.

"I will prove that my love is stronger than the legendary pull of the mate bond. I will choose you over and over again. You have nothing to worry about. Soon we will be married and welcome our baby into the world. My fated has no room in my life," he said with conviction.

"Your mother hates me, Sylvester. What if she interferes?" I said, and he shook his head.

"My mother doesn't hate you, and she can never make me do anything I do not want to do," He said and lifted my hand and kissed it.

"This is it," he said, pulling me close to kiss him.

His lips felt so good on mine, and I opened up to receive the goodness he was giving. Erasing Devin's kiss.

I kissed him hungrily, wanting to feel every bit of him, knowing this was it for me.

My heart was beating fast. A mixture of joy and uncertainty.

He travelled with his lips to my neck and sucked.

I wanted him to sink his teeth in and seal the deal.

I wanted to disregard tradition and just go for it. I held his head tightly, and he growled and groaned. He was fighting Knight, and I did not want him to.

Kaira gave me strength, and I straddled him and opened my robe.

He went for my breasts with his lips, and I looked up, pushing my chest to give him access.

He worshipped them and paid attention. I felt his bulge, and I wanted him to seal the deal.

He gently flipped our positions and got off the bed, leaving me gasping for air and disappointed.

“You need to rest, Tamia. I want you so badly that if I go ahead now, I will claim you,” He confessed, and I took off my robe completely.

“I do not care, Sylvester. I am already yours,” I said, and his eyes went completely dark.

He had entered a battle he would lose because Knight charged back to the bed and kissed me hungrily; he moved down my body fast and went between my legs.

“Mine,” he growled his famous words.

The words that brought me back from the trance.

The words that helped me keep my promise and gave me control.

I welcomed the words and opened wider for him.

He teased my knob with his tongue and then looked at me to be sure I was seeing what he was doing. He sucked gently, and I moaned. He looked at me again.

“I won’t be able to control myself,” He told me, and I shook my head.

“Then don’t,” I said, and he knelt between my legs and drove his cock into me.

He growled and began to pump fast and hard.

I welcomed it, but a part of me said I was wrong.

He should know...

He should know, and just like that, my body went cold, and I began to cry.

Sylvester gently pulled out and lifted my face to look at him.

“What is the matter, green eyes?” He said with concern, and my tears fell freely.

“I did something bad, Sylvester, and I am afraid you will hate me for it,” I said, and he froze.

“What did you do, Tamia?” He asked gently. I knew he was controlling himself.

He stood up from the bed, and I looked at him, afraid.

“What happened?” He said, and my tears fell freely.

“I...I...I...,” I said, stuttering between sobs.

“I saw Devin at the festival,” I said. He clenched his fists, and his hands began to shake. His eyes darkened instantly, and I could see anger rise in them. There was no going back from this.

“He was my Fated,” I said, and Knight began to growl. I could feel the pressure of his presence.

“I did not know until last night, Sylvester. I swear. I did not know. He said it was because of Leo’s mark,” I said, rushing through the words, but his growls became louder.

“The pull was strong and intoxicating, and we made out,” I confessed, and he roared. I wiped away my tears.

“He almost claimed me, but I rejected him. I rejected him. It took a lot of effort, but I rejected him,” I said and looked at him.

“I had nothing to give him. He accepted because he realised that my heart belonged to you. It was hard, but he accepted it.” I said and began to weep.

He approached me on the bed, and my heart was pounding from fear. I thought he would do something crazy, but he hugged me tightly and kissed my neck.

“It’s okay, darling. It’s okay. You didn’t do anything wrong. You did not betray me. You did something most people are incapable of; you honoured me and kept your promise,” He said and sucked the soft spot of my neck.

“You have nothing to be ashamed of. You and Kaira have nothing to be ashamed of,” he said, looking at me with his black wolf eyes.

“Thank you, Tamia, thank you for coming back to me,” he said, tears streaming down his face. He was afraid.

“Your sacrifice will not be in vain, Tamia. I promise I will never do anything to make you regret choosing me instead of your fated. I promise you.” He said, and I nodded; tears of fear and uncertainty streamed down my face, and he hugged me and kissed my neck.

“I am yours, Tamia. My heart, body and soul. You will never have to share me with anyone. I will never hurt or betray you. I will never touch anyone else until I die. It will only be you now and always. Just you, Tamia and no one else. I love you,” he said and arrested my lips with his.

He laid me down gently on the bed and gradually used his tongue to leave a trail of pleasure on my skin. Tracing from my neck to my core. He sucked on my mound gently, and all the fear I felt was replaced with pleasure; the load was lifted, and I felt light.

I came immediately, and he placed himself in me and pumped. His eyes were dark, and Kaira took over.

He pumped and pumped, and I came several times. Even though we weren’t fated, I hoped this was it.

We lay in the bed naked, and Sylvester cracked many jokes about what his mother did when she returned.

According to him, she was hurt he didn't come after her. She wanted to go missing, and he would come and beg her, and then she will make her demands as her condition to return. When that didn't happen, she returned and accused him of abandoning her and choosing me over her. The woman was just unbelievably petty. Sylvester wanted me to forgive her, but I bore no grudge against her, to begin with. I had just decided that I would be careful around her.

Stephanie had said hurtful and mean things to me. It wasn't okay. It wasn't okay for her to switch and insult my friends and me because she was hurt. It wasn't okay.

I could understand Sylvester's willingness to forgive her; she was his mother, but I couldn't.

After what Jake had told me, I planned on investigating her too.

I knew the woman was hiding something and was determined to find it out.

"Dominic and Bryce will be tried tomorrow. Do you think you can join me?" He asked, and I searched his eyes.

"With Stephanie around?" I asked him, and he laughed.

"She won't trouble you. She knows what you did for Dominic.." He said, and I interrupted him.

"I didn't do it for her. I did it for you and the love of truth. She shouldn't get it twisted. The things she said to me still hunts me. Calling me and my friends social climbers and eastern whores.." I said, and Sylvester touched my hand and kissed it.

"You aren't any of those things.." he said, and I nodded.

"I know I am none of those things, Sylvester, but it isn't alright that she calls us names. It isn't easy being here. If it weren't for the love we found with you, Marcel and Theodore, Avery, Linda and me would not have it easy mentally. It isn't okay," I said, and he pulled me close.

"I am sorry about the condition in which you were brought here, Tamia. I will never take prisoners again. It is a tradition that I am ready to abolish, but I will want you with me tomorrow," He said, and I nodded.

“With pleasure,” I said, and we both smiled.

I knew the trial would be tedious because I suspected the culprit of being in the council. If not, the entire panel and Vino was too weak and scared to do their job.

~Tamia~

“That went well,” Kaira said, purring in my head as Sylvester walked to the bathroom naked.

I stared at his chiselled body, and it made me groan. How could someone be carved so perfectly? Tight butt cheeks, define calves. His muscles flexed, and his tattoo was masterfully done.

“How did we end up with such a hottie?” Kaira said, and I had to shut my horny wolf up because Leo was hot too but not this hot.

Kaira was a complete contrast from a few hours ago when she was panicking about our make-out session with Devin.

I wondered how Devin was doing and if he had indeed moved on. I hoped so because the last thing I wanted was for him to feel cheated.

“Come over,” I heard Sylvester in my head, and I left the bed naked and went into the bathroom. He laid in the tub with water and asked me to sit between his legs so he could wash me.

I got in with him, and he kissed my shoulder, which made me moan. He lathered the sponge and began to wash my skin. I knew I was being pampered, so I relished the moment. Taking everything in and letting him spoil me.

Morning came, and we had our breakfast together.

Everyone congratulated me, and I noticed Avery was a bit affected by it. She was happy for me, but she was sad for herself.

I touched her hand lightly to encourage her, and she knew that I knew.

Soon we left the place and got ready to go to the council hall.

Stephanie approached us on our way out, and I was a bit uncomfortable.

I did not know what to tell her, but I chose to be civil for Sylvester's sake.

"Good morning, dear Tamia," she said, and I smiled at her in response.

"Congratulations. Thanks to you I will soon be a grandma," She said, looking genuinely happy, and I smiled at her, not wanting to say anything.

She touched my hand and patted it lightly.

"We should talk when you return," she said gently with pleading eyes. I did not want to be alone in a room with her, but I knew Sylvester won't see anything wrong with it, so I nodded.

"As long as the conversation does not include my doom and slurs, I will make room," I said, and Sylvester chuckled.

She pulled me into a hug.

"I am sorry for all the hurtful things I said to you," She said. Because she didn't strike me as the type to eat her words, I was wary of her apology, but I accepted it for Sylvester's sake. I did not want him to feel torn between his mother and me, but I had questions for her and hoped she would be truthful enough to answer them.

We walked away, and a vehicle was waiting for us.

Usually, Sylvester used his jeep; I wondered why he opted to have a driver drive us in a car. We got into the backseat, and he held me.

"A car?" I said, and he nodded.

"No one drives my jeep, and I want to hold you all through," He said and kissed my neck.

"I still can't believe you rejected your fated for me. You have proven to me that true love exists," he said, and I looked at him and searched his eyes. The driver started the vehicle and moved.

"I was scared you would be mad," I confessed, and he shook his head.

"I wasn't growling from anger, green eyes; I was growling from fear. Ever since the attack on the northern gates, I have feared that Devin would take

you from me. What you told me has now put my mind at peace,” He said and touched my belly lightly.

“I want to claim you so badly, and I doubt I can wait until the blue moon. If I did not need the blue moon for it to work, I would have done it last night. I want us to be connected on all levels, Tamia; I want you inside me. I want you to share my soul, and I share yours,” he said, and we kissed.

We finally arrived at the council hall and went to sit in Sylvester’s box. Everyone was there, Avery, Marcel, Theodore and Linda. On the floor at the centre was a broken version of Dominic, a very afraid Bryce and a furious version of Larry.

I knew Larry shouldn’t be there, but Sylvester wanted to humiliate the man and make him suffer.

He was justified to do so because the man tried to use Dominic to work against him.

The sooner Dominic realises the enemy is from without, the better.

Vino greeted Sylvester and acknowledged our presence, then handed over to Jacob Mikhailov, the council spokesman.

“I speak on behalf of the council when I say you have overstepped your bounds, my lord,” The man said, and Sylvester was silent.

“Civil and criminal matters are overseen by the council. You have abused your power by holding the prisoners in your custody and choosing to preside over this case. We hereby ask you to withdraw and only observe as we deal with the matters.” He said, and Sylvester raised his hand and signalled the man to be seated.

“Tell me of the council’s investigations and findings first before I respond to your demand,” He said calmly.

Pamela, who I had slowly started to hate, stood up to speak.

“What more is there to know? Enforcer Golubev has confessed the truth. We are here for sentencing,” she said, and I could feel Sylvester’s rage.

“If it was possible to unseat this council, I will. This council has failed woefully in their duty. Was it not this council that accused me of being wicked without investigating the allegation against me? And now you have done the same. Unfortunately, I will decide on this one because my brother is involved. I have done some investigations, and here are my findings. Enforcer Golubev has confessed that he was blackmailed into framing Dominic Volkov. We are in possession of the letter he received from the culprit instructing him to go to the East and cause trouble, and name Dominic as the culprit. In exchange, his pregnant mate will be returned safe and sound.” he said, and people exclaimed.

“We have the letter,” I said, “and I have made copies for you to see.”

“May we see it?” Council Woman Joan Clayman said, and Sylvester nodded.

“What use is this council when it fails to do the needful? I think that there are people actively working against my family and me. And because of this, I will be presiding over every decision until further notice.” He said, and they began to murmur.

“That is wrong; our family fought for this together. You might be a Royal, but we all share in this...” Pamela said, and Sylvester nodded.

“That is why I have not ordered the arrest of every council member. I hope you all have no hand in this because it is disturbing that you do not investigate and are quick to condemn and destroy what is mine. My brother would have been sentenced and executed for nothing. I want this council to focus on finding the culprit behind this. My Luna and I know that Jenny was the target of the attack that took her life, not my mother; I want this council to spend their precious time figuring out why. I want this council to reduce my workload for me. If I have to get involved with the investigations, I will water down the council’s power. According to the law, I can do it,” he said, and they were all quiet. I noticed some of them look at me scornfully.

“With all due respect, your Eminence, Lunas are not allowed in the council hall, and they are not allowed to preside over matters. Their duty is to make sure the Volkov bloodline always has an heir. You are not married to this woman yet; it will be advisable to keep her out of our business for now,” Joan said, and I knew what they were implying. I always wondered why Stephanie never came; now I know why.

“Well, not in my Epoch,” Sylvester said and stood up.

“How many of you can boast of having Tamia Riverstorm Albert’s achievements added to their belts? She is a strategist, an analyst, a warrior and one of the best investigators in our world. If that does not qualify her to sit in this box, observe, interfere and decide over matters, then I don’t know what would,” he said and sat down.

“I will not repeat myself. Let this be the last time any of you will speak of my Luna as if she is an outsider and an object. I will take it as an insult to my person, and I will not take it easy regardless of your family.” He said and sighed.

I looked at them, and they were silent. Some of them looked at me scornfully, except for Vino, who was smiling at me. I returned his smile, and he nodded.

They read the photocopied letter that Sylvester had passed to them, and they were silent. Then Pamela moved to question Bryce, and he was honest. She asked him if anyone was coerced.

“Are you sure you speak the truth, Enforcer?” She asked him, and Bryce kept his head down.

“I feared they would kill my wife and our unborn child. The instructions were clear. I was to get to the Volkov estate so it would seem like I had a meeting with Lord Dominic. I was to go to the East and state that the council sent me under Lord Volkov’s orders to collect development tax. I was asked to be rude and threaten the head Alpha of the East, and when I was asked who sent me, I was to tell this council it was lord Dominic Volkov. That is the truth,” The man said, and Pamela nodded.

“So, what made you tell the truth?” She asked him.

“My Lord and Lady interrogated me in the council prison and figured out I was lying. I had to give up the pretence and tell the truth,” he confessed, and Pamela shook her head.

“Are you sure you were not coerced by Lady Tamia?” She asked, and I would have slapped her if I had been close to her. Suddenly I began to feel the woman loathed me. I wondered what I did to these people.

She was now high on my investigation list. She better be clean, or I would disgrace her and make sure she loses her seat. I will make an example of the bitch. I was pissed off.

I felt Sylvester's hand on my thighs, and he touched it gently and smiled at me.

"Calm down, green eyes," he pleaded with me, and I nodded.

"I wasn't threatened or coerced by my Lady." Enforcer Bryce said, and the woman kept quiet. I thought she would dare to ask if Sylvester coerced him, but she didn't. The bitch.

"Very well then, I doubt there is any need for a trail," Vino said, and people were silent.

"I hereby acquit Dominic Volkov of all the allegations made against him. I also acquit Councilman Larry McMillian Babanins of the suspicion of conniving with Dominic to commit treason." Vino said, and I remembered the Babanins as one of the families that Maurice took out, according to Jake Brighton. I kept a mental note of it.

Some enforcers went to release Dominic and Larry from the chains. Dominic walked away with his head bowed, feeling ashamed. Likewise Larry, but I noticed something while they walked; Dominic kept his distance from Larry. Locked up for a few days, death looming over his head made Dominic rethink certain things.

Soon I saw Dominic come to join us in our box. I was uncomfortable, but he was Sylvester's brother.

"Enforcer Bryce Golubev, you have lied against royalty. You committed an offence that would have cost the man his life. You also misled this council, which is an act of treason. As a result, we sentence you to death by beheading." Vino pronounced with a tinge of anger, and I squeezed Sylvester's lap.

"Do not let them kill him. This will not be the end of people plotting against you. The next person will never tell the truth if Bryce loses his life," I said quickly, and Sylvester stopped the enforcers from taking Bryce away.

“No one is going to die by beheading,” Sylvester said comfortably, and Dominic growled. I could understand Dominic’s anger, but Bryce had no choice.

“He spoke up and told the truth. He could have also maintained his lie, which would have saved him from punishment. But he told the truth and, in turn, saved my brother and councilman Larry from being

sentenced for treason. As a result, I pardon him and move him to work at the Volkov estate. I would rather surround myself with honest people than connivers,” Sylvester said, and the council murmured.

“The law, your Eminence,” Pamela said, and Sylvester shook his head.

“I choose mercy,” he said, and the woman looked at me. Her eyes showed she knew I was the one that instigated it. I needed to find a way to clip her wings before she became a problem for me. As things were, Vino was the only council member who did not hate me.

~Devin~

I decided to attend Jake’s festival to unwind. It was a last-minute decision. I planned to spend four days in Brighton and then return to Greenwood. It was a great plan. It was supposed to ease my stress and help me think straight.

When I arrived in Brighton in the evening of the festival and Jake told me that Tamia was around, I was giddy. Rex was overjoyed, and I could not believe how easy it would be to take my mate away from Sylvester. Hearing that Sylvester sent her to have a peace talk with Jake unaccompanied made me think of two different extremes.

Either they loved and trusted each other so much that he would allow her to handle state matters without fear, or her life meant nothing. He was willing to gamble it away by using her to apologise to Jake, hoping Jake won’t attack and kill her.

Hearing Jake talk about her made me realise she was alright.

He told me she arrived a bit ill and pale looking, and I was afraid Sylvester maltreated her in the north.

I planned it all.

The rose, the garden. I wanted it to be perfect. I wanted it to be romantic. It is all I have ever wanted. Finding my mate and starting a real life in love and happiness.

Tamia was perfect. I did not care that she was once married or was taken by the wolf lord. I did not care. I just wanted my mate.

Rex hoped to hold her, accept her and claim her. I wasn't going to waste any time.

I was going to run fast and sink my teeth into her.

I did not need to wait for the blue moon; that was only done by chosen mates for the claiming to work.

I did not need the blue moon to claim my mate. The moon goddess had given her to me.

So I used my scent to lure her.

She scented Peach and Wildflowers. Her scent was vivid and more precise than when we first met at the party.

She was delicious, and she was mine. I hoped she would follow, and she did.

When she saw me and tears started streaming down her cheeks, I knew it wouldn't be easy.

Everything she said to me in tears broke my heart. Not because she refused to run into my arms, but because what she was saying was true.

I took my moment with her for granted. I wronged her deeply.

I knew she was hurting with Leo, and I should have challenged him for her hand, but I was diplomatic about it. I made the biggest mistake of my life.

I should have taken her from him that night. I took our moment for granted, and Volkov stole her heart.

I could not blame her for rejecting me. But deep down, she should have given me a chance to prove myself.

No pain or weakness came with the rejection, but the feeling was the same.

I knew she battled her wolf to let me go. As much as I wanted to be persistent, I had to respect her wishes. I lost my chance, and I hated myself for it. Rex did not forgive me for accepting the rejection.

We actually thought she would let us claim her. The feeling was right. It felt so good, and I wanted to sink my teeth into her neck, but she pulled away. I could not force myself on her.

I left Brighton the next day a broken man.

Throughout my journey back to Greenwood, my wolf howled, blaming me for the loss and rejection. He, too, was right.

When I held her in my arms at the party, he urged me to throw away the alliance and challenge Leo for her hand. Her eyes were sad and withdrawn. I should've listened to my wolf, but I didn't.

I wanted the marriage to end naturally because they weren't ready to let each other go, even though Amanda had come between them. I know Leo still feels the same way.

I got home and thought I wouldn't long for her anymore, but I still wanted her. I remembered how it felt to have her in my arms, and I wished things were different and she didn't fall in love with Volkov.

"What will we do now?" Rex asked me, still mourning our loss.

"I do not know, but I think we shouldn't be quick to move on. Tamia does not like to share, and knowing the history of the Volkovs, they always have more than one woman. I plan on waiting a bit to see how things go between them." I told my wolf, and he was silent.

I wasn't going to actively try to separate them, but I was afraid she might lose on his side too. There was no way he could be different from his father. I had to make sure I remained available a little longer for her sake.

"I say we wage war and take her from him. The goddess made her for us. She is ours. He has stolen what is ours," Rex said, and tears streamed down my face.

“She is in love with him, Rex. We can’t beat that. The only thing we can do is wait them out. He might slip up, and if he does, I will be there for her, even if it is as a friend, but this can’t be it,” I said, trying to convince myself there was hope.

My day went slow, and I returned to Greenwood more depressed than I had left.

A day later, I was sitting in my office when Lukman, my beta, brought me an invitation from the Northern Council.

“We hereby invite your pack to partake in our tournament starting next month’s new moon. The open competitions are Polo, Swimming, Football, Golf, Croquet, Volleyball, One Hundred Metre Dash and Ring Fight (without any presence of Silver). Please reply with the list of sports you are interested in and the name of your team members. Thank you, and we look forward to hosting you,” it read, and I looked at the person that sent the invitation.

“From the Northern Council, Signed Joan Clayman. ”

It was strange that the northern council would invite me to participate in the all-region sports games. They usually invite lesser southern Alphas, but they had chosen to invite me this year. I contemplated whether I should accept or not.

“Weirdly, the council would invite us, knowing we have an issue with the lord,” Lukman said. I even had more issues with the Lord because Volkov had stolen the heart of my fated.

“Should we take part in it?” Lukman asked, and I did not know what to say.

Usually, I would say no, but it also meant I would see Tamia one more time before her wedding.

It meant I could officially spend a month in the north without having any hindrances because the tournament takes that long before we complete.

The Polo alone takes two weeks. It would be a great opportunity.

“Do you know if Volkov is participating?” I asked Lukman, and he nodded.

“He plays Polo every year.” He said, and I began to grin from ear to ear.

“Do we have a good Polo team?” I asked him, and he nodded.

“Nikolas Sullivan has a good team. He is a northerner but relocated to the south eleven years ago with his niece. I am sure they would participate in the north as a southern team against Volkov’s team.” He said, and I began to grin because this would be an excellent opportunity to spend time with Tamia.

As much as I hated to think of it, she would be around Sylvester often, and if he played Polo, we would be around each other often.

It will give me a chance.

I need to prove that I am a better man for her. I did not plan on playing dirty, but I planned on making an effort. If I still lose, I would gracefully bow out, but I would try as penance for not taking her away from Leo when I had the chance.

Somehow I knew it was my fault she ended up in the north. If I had taken her from Leo, the north would have still attacked the east, but she wouldn’t be there to give herself up. She would have been with me.

I looked at Lukman, grateful for the opportunity that had dropped on my lap, and I wasn’t going to waste it.

“Ask Nikolas Sullivan to see me in my office. I need to finalise with him and respond to the Northern council as soon as possible before the slots for Polo teams are filled.” I told Lukman, and he went to sort the matter.

I waited nervously in my office, grateful for the opportunity.

Knowing the invitation came in late because most Alphas received their invites two weeks ago, it seemed like a last-minute thing. I believed I wasn’t meant to be invited, but they chose to invite me for reasons known to them.

I felt it was off that the council would invite me, but it might be their step toward making peace with me. After all, Sylvester had sent Tamia to Brighton to make peace with Jake, and he had somehow made peace with Leo.

Leo never spoke scornfully of the Dark Alpha, and I believe he should because the man took his wife, whom he still loves, but Leo seemed to be okay with it. Volkov might have suddenly realised the errors of their ways and

wanted to make amends, or this might also be an attempt to keep his enemies close. I did not know what it may be, but I was on alert. If it was a trap, I had to get out of it. If it weren't for my need to see Tamia again and try to prove myself to her, I would have declined.

Nikolas arrived a few hours later, and he had brought his niece. Lukeman had sent a helicopter to pick him up from Pridewood, where they were staying. It wasn't far, but they would have taken longer to get to Greenwood.

The man looked fit and a bit younger than I imagined. He was in his early forties, and I was sure he could swing a mallet with ease. His niece was a pretty blonde woman, roughly twenty-six or twenty-seven. She was very stunning and had that legendary northern beauty.

I stood up to greet them, and they greeted me with a lot of respect. His niece seemed in awe of me and made me feel like a celebrity.

"Please, make yourselves comfortable," I said, offering them seats, and they sat down.

"To what do we owe this honour, alpha?" Nikolas asked, and I smiled so he would know to relax and that I meant well.

"I heard you have the best Polo team in the south," I said, and the man smiled, trying to be modest.

"We try alpha, but it isn't a popular game in the south as it is in the north," he said, and I nodded.

"I know you relocated here with your niece from the north. I was hoping your team could represent us in the all-region tournament starting next new moon," I said, and the man was stunned. He could not contain his joy.

"It will be an honour. I have been looking for an opportunity to showcase my teams. It will be great," The man said, and I looked at his niece, who seemed to be drooling over me, and I smiled at her.

"You play too?" I asked her, and she nodded.

"Yes, she does, but she won't play at the tournament. She isn't qualified to play at that level; she will just manage the teams," The man said, and I had no clue what it entailed, but it sounded like a good thing.

“How many teams would we enter into the competition?” I asked the man.

“Three. We have only three strong teams in the south,” He said, and I nodded.

“Very well then, I will reply and ask them to save three slots for us in the polo tournament. I will need the names of your teams and team members,” I told the man, and he nodded, smiling.

“They will give you a place to rest, and the helicopter will take you back to Pridewood tomorrow,” I said, and the man was excited about it.

I was excited, too, because I had a non-threatening legal reason to be in the north for a whole month. Rex and I were elated, and I relaxed a bit on my couch, hopeful.

~Tamia~

Dominic locked himself in his room for three days after we returned from the council hearing.

I knew it was shame and fear.

Somehow the man did not expect that to happen to him.

I believed realising that he could easily lose his life woke him up.

I wondered how his relationship with Larry would be henceforth.

I knew the council was working against the Volkovs, but we needed to find out who the mastermind was and why, so I decided to start from the beginning.

I went to Sylvester’s office, and he was deep in thought, concentrating on the documents on his desk. Realising some people were actively working against him put him on edge.

Initially, it was based on speculation, but now it was apparent.

Whoever threatened Bryce was either the mastermind or part of the clique.

I looked at him and realised he needed a break.

I had to clear my throat for him to realise I had entered his office. It was either he was far away in his mind or so used to my scent that he did not think I had come in. Either way, he looked up and smiled at me.

“Hey,” he said, and I smiled and looked at him.

“I want to talk to you, but first, let’s go horse riding. I want to go back to the cliff where I can see the alpiners,” I said, and he smiled at me, but his eyes looked tired.

“How about we do that tomorrow, darling? I am busy. Besides, it would be best if you weren’t riding in your condition; I will drive the jeep there. Maybe have a picnic?” he asked, and I laughed.

“But I am allowed to ride you...” I said, and his wolf flashed

“I want us to go now; you need a break, Sylvester. It would help if you unwound so you can think straight. Everyone is going crazy. Marcel and Theodore look like you. Dominic has locked himself inside his room, and your mother is confused. We all need a break, and I want to take it now, with you, at the cliff.” I insisted, and he closed the file on his desk and put it away in a silver safe.

It amazes me how comfortable the northerners were around Silver. They trained with it and used it as storage for essential things. It was mid-bugging. The silver was not in the same space as him but was enclosed in an iron cupboard to prevent it from weakening the people in the room.

Sylvester followed me to the room, and I was glad he listened.

We returned to our bedroom to change our outfits.

“What did you want to tell me other than going to the cliff?” He said, and I smiled at him while I changed into something comfortable.

“I think we should send proper investigators to search Jenny’s house and go through her belongings. Avery, Linda and I can lead it. There are specific things that I am looking for that the people we send might miss, and we are bored sitting doing nothing,” I said, and he was silent; then he went to sit on the bed and started unbuttoning his shirt.

The sight of his bare chest might stop us from making it to the cliff because I was already getting turned on by his stripping gesture alone.

“What are you looking for?” he asked.

“Journals, notes, emails, scribbles, objects...things that can tell a story,” I said, and he took off his shirt, flexing his muscles.

He was so hot that I could no longer concentrate on what I was doing.

I wanted to run my fingers against his chest and feel his muscles. He was mine, all mine, and I wanted him.

“Sylvester,” I asked him, drooling over the sight of his body. He looked at me with a question in his eyes.

“What a hot body you have,” I said to him, and he laughed.

We both laughed; just like that, his spirit was lifted, and his mood was lighter.

“The better to seduce you with, my dear,” He said, and we both laughed because I was playing the role of little red, and he was my big bad wolf.

I could not handle my hormones anymore.

We could talk about Jenny after. But the cliff would have to wait for another day. I went to straddle him on the bed and opened my shirt.

“You need to finish the talk, darling. The wolf desires to eat little red riding hood. Unlike her, I am willing to be devoured,” I said, and he gently touched my tits and sucked them gently in his mouth, swirling his tongue on them.

They were sensitive and hard, and I moaned. I wanted more, something was starving in me, and I needed him to satisfy it.

“I will eat you until you beg me to stop,” he said with a low growl and flipped me onto the bed.

He kissed my neck and nibbled my ears, sucking the lobe and breathing into it. I had goosebumps all over, and my pussy was clenching violently.

“Oh, Sylvester. Please,” I pleaded with him.

My body craved him, aching for his touch, tongue, and cock. My core was aching for release.

He worshipped my body with his mouth and travelled down, sucking and licking my skin, leaving a trail of ecstasy, anticipation, need, desire and want. I dug my nails into the sheet, anticipating him.

“Sylvester,” I moaned, and he kissed my lips but avoided my clit. He was teasing me.

“Ahhh,” I moaned from anticipation and lack of patience.

“I need it now,” I said, trying to press my thighs together to ease the ache.

“Tell me what you want, Tamia,” He growled lowly.

“I want you to eat me until I can take no more, then fuck me until I come all over you,” I said, moaning and writhing under him.

I wasn't a shy woman, and now he knew. I could be vocal when I wanted, and I wanted those things and more.

“Now, Sylvester,” I said, my pussy dripping and anticipating his attention and care.

“Prove to me that you are my big bad wolf,” I said, and he growled and dug in.

He licked my knob and travelled down my slit to my pussy.

“Ahhhhhhhh, Sylvester,” I cried.

I was extra sensitive, and he knew it.

“Do not cum until I tell you to,” He ordered, and I nodded, waiting to see how long I could hold out against his skilful tongue. His skill was unparalleled.

“Sylvester,” I cried, wanting to cum so he could bury himself in me. I wanted to feel his skin against mine. I wanted to wrap myself in his scent.

He worked on me until I could no longer take it.

“Please, Alpha...” I moaned, and he growled with satisfaction.

“Cum,” he linked me.

I released and felt the climax ripple through my veins.

My nerves tingled, and my hair was probably standing.

I felt like my spirit was going to jump out on me, and I stretched, then began to crumble from the over- sensitivity of my clit that he refused to let go of.

Sylvester placed his finger in me, kneaded my walls sweetly, then placed himself in and began to pump.

He pounded into me like a beast. Stretching my walls and satisfying my need for him. Everything was heightened, and I was enjoying it.

I dug my nails into his skin and took it all.

Placing my legs over his shoulder and kneeling between my legs, he pumped viciously, going all the way in.

I saw his teeth elongate and his claws grow out, meaning he was enjoying himself. Knight was trying to take over, and I wanted him to.

He pumped and fought a claim. I shattered all over him, feeling liquid sip out of me. Sylvester finally came and lay by my side. I could see that he was relieved, and I was satiated.

“So you want to play detective?” he said. After we had laid down for forty minutes, I nodded.

“I, too, believe we will find something out in Jenny’s place. Hence why I sealed and guarded her house after her death,” he confessed, and I squealed at him.

“But I can’t let you go there with the ladies,” He said, and I frowned at him. He sat up and sighed.

“You are my life, Tamia. I have never been this much in love in my entire existence, and people know. They know you are my weakness. They know how much I love you because I do not hide it. I can’t, even if I want to,” he said and bowed.

“After what happened with Dominic, I realised people are out to get me and hurt me. They can only hurt me by hurting you and our baby. We will be parents soon, Tamia. I want you protected at all costs. I know you will do an excellent job, tell my men what to look for, and they will bring it, but I can’t let my wife out of my sight,” He said and bent to kiss my lower belly.

“I have wanted this all my life. A mate that genuinely loves my family and me. Now that I have you, I can’t be careless, Tamia. Please. Do not push it. These people are dangerous. They took Bryce’s

pregnant mate. I am not saying you are weak or can’t defend yourself, but they are cunning and unknown. There is nothing more difficult than fighting the unknown,” he said and touched my hand.

“Please, my love, do not argue with me on this one,” he pleaded and kissed my hand.

“I want you to instruct my men, and they will do as you have requested. Share your thoughts with Theodore and Marcel, but I won’t let you play detective. If you are bored, think of something to do for the All-regional games that does not involve you participating in the sports activities,” He said. I knew he needed me to say yes. He was genuinely afraid, and I could see it. So I nodded.

“Basically, what I need are journals, notes however insignificant. If I can’t go, at least let Theodore or Marcel lead the search. Finding these items isn’t the only important thing. How and where they are found matters. It can say a lot and give us more information than the items themselves,” I said, and he sighed.

“Very well, we will all go there. I will not let you out of my sight, Tamia. I won’t.” he said, and laid back down and pulled me close. He sucked on my sweet spot gently.

“I won’t survive if I lose you. If anything ever happens to you, my darling, I will become the Dark Alpha,” he said, and as much as it sounded like a joke, I knew he was serious.

We both fell asleep, and I woke up in the night.

It was nine at night, so I decided to walk to Avery’s wing to check on her. She had been depressed lately, and I knew it was because of my pregnancy.

I knew she feared something was wrong with her, just like I was. I was sure she was alright and would happen soon, but I needed to ensure she was okay.

I left my room barefooted so I don't wake Sylvester. He was sleeping peacefully, and he needed the rest.

While I walked down the halls barefooted, causing me to have stealth, I heard someone whispering on the phone. I did not like eavesdropping, but these were dangerous times, so I leaned closer to listen.

"It is too tight right now; I can't get it for you. You will have to wait and let things loosen up a bit. Maybe during the games," A voice that sounded like Lily said. Then I heard her hang up and approach, so I hid behind a door. She walked out of the corner she was hiding and looked about to be sure the coast was clear before leaving.

I knew women from the harem were not allowed phones, and Sylvester never told me she had special privileges. Whatever she was doing, she was up to no good, and I wondered what she was asked to procure that would need to be done during the games when the security wasn't so tight anymore. I planned on telling Sylvester and having the woman investigated. She was scornful and might try to hurt us for it.

I walked and bumped into Stephanie, the last person I wanted to see.

~Tamia~

Stephanie did not look well. Her eyes were swollen, and her hands were shaking. It was clear that she had been crying.

I wanted to ignore her, but I couldn't. I knew Sylvester wouldn't, so I decided to show some concern.

"Are you alright?" I asked, and she looked at me and shook her head.

"I am not, Tamia. Everything is falling apart. Dominic won't come out of his room. He said he feels like a nobody. I have tried to talk him out of it, but he is too ashamed to let himself mingle," She said, and I nodded.

“You need to give him time, Stephanie. He had a near-death experience. If Bryce had not confessed, he might have been dead by now. He will need time to recover from it,” I said, and she hugged me and began to cry.

I did not know what to tell her. So I hugged her in return and patted her back.

“You need to take it easy, Stephanie. Crying won’t fix him. You need to find the things and people that make him happy and try to surround him with them,” I said, and she sighed and bowed.

She looked at me and studied me.

“You will be the Lady of the north soon, Tamia; there are things I need to tell you. Things that I swore to take to my grave but I suspect are part of why all these are happening to my sons,” She said, and I was surprised that she was willing to trust me with her secret.

“Are you sure you want to tell me?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“You will be Luna soon and rule by his side. You’re already doing it, and unlike me, your Alpha loves you and gives you freedom. You take part in council discussions and give advice. None of which I was allowed in my time. You give northern women hope, Tamia.” She said and sighed.

“There are things I need to tell for the sake of the Volkov bloodline. You need to know that you have a Volkov growing inside you. You need to know the truth about Maurice and our children..” She said, and my mind went to what Jake had told me.

Was she planning on telling me the truth, or was she planning on deceiving me like she might have deceived her children?

“Does it have anything to do with what is going on?” I asked, and she paused, looking at me. She was contemplating what to tell me. She was sizing me up, and I wasn’t angry at all.

“It might,” she confessed, and I looked at her.

“I will join you in your room in a few minutes. I want to check on Avery. The hallway isn’t as safe as we think; we might have spies lurking about the place,” I linked her, and she nodded at me.

I still could not shake off Lily's phone conversation. I could not shake off the fact that I knew she wasn't supposed to have a phone. I couldn't shake it off. Something was off, and I planned on figuring it out.

Stephanie walked past me, heading to her room while I headed towards the Beta's wing to see Avery. I would have checked on Linda too, but I knew she and Marcel went on a date.

I got to Avery's door and knocked.

"It's open," I heard Avery say, and I gently let myself in. I saw my friend sitting on a couch and working on an embroidery piece. I looked at the leaf design she was weaving into the fabric and realised that her skill had improved, but she was still marring the fabric.

"Tamia, you and Sylvester missed dinner," She said, and I nodded and sat beside her.

"How are you feeling?" I asked, and she sighed.

"I feel nervous," She said, and I wondered why.

"Why?" I asked, and she sighed and put down her supposed artwork, which was more of a cluster and an honest attempt at being creative.

"I have wanted babies for as long, but when Michelle came into our lives, it became a tall dream. Now I found love again. Marcel and I started trying before you and Sylvester got together. Then Linda and Theodore got together," She said and bowed her head and began to weep.

"Yet I am still waiting in line, Tamia. I waited in line with Max, and I believe that was why Michelle got the best of him, and now here I am with Marcel," she said, and I moved close to her and rubbed her back.

"Do not be afraid, Avery; it will happen for you, too," I said, rubbing her back.

"But when?" She asked, and I sighed.

"You should see a doctor to know if anything is wrong and if it can be corrected. That is what I would do," I said, and she broke the hug and stared at me.

“You are right, Tamia,” She said and held my hand.

“Join me at the hospital tomorrow, please,” She said, and I remembered my conversation with Sylvester about protection and not being on my own.

“I suggest you go with Marcel. It would be best if you handled it together,” I said, and she shook her head.

“I want you to come with me, Tamia. I do not want Marcel. What if something is wrong with me? He will know and might change his mind. I love him, Tamia; I can’t lose him,” She said with genuine fear in her eyes.

“Nothing is the matter with you, Avery. I will speak to Sylvester to let me follow you to the hospital,” I said to ease her mind, and she thanked me.

I tried to counsel her to the best of my ability and decided to leave because I did not want to keep Stephanie waiting.

My actions might have seemed a bit stupid. Whatever Stephanie wanted to tell me must have been serious, so it was wrong to put her on hold, but I knew that whatever she was going to tell me might leave me shellshocked, and I won’t be able to check on my friend, so I wanted to get it out of the way before speaking to Stephanie.

I walked still barefooted so people could not hear my footsteps. I took a mental note to do this often. Lily was on my watch list. I needed to know who gave her a phone and who she was communicating with.

I got to Stephanie’s door and knocked.

“Please come in, Tamia; I know it is you,” She said, and I let myself in.

“Lock the door,” She said, and I did as she said and approached her where she sat on the couch in her room.

I went to sit with her, and she smiled at me. I was still wary of her, but I let it be because she was open to me again. There were only two possibilities: to misguide or tell the truth, so I was attentive.

"I am sorry to ask you this question, but I need you to be honest. How did it feel when Leo met his fated?" She asked, and I looked at her. I contemplated answering it, but I knew I had to, or the conversation won't make headway.

"Heartwrenching. My life was over. He was the lead alpha of the East; I had nowhere to go, and no one would want me. I could not leave, so I was there through it all until the north attacked and gave me a chance to escape," I said, and she looked at me stunned.

"Yes, I gave myself as a tribute to leave Leo. We would have subdued the people who attacked us, but I did not want to be the third wheel in their home anymore. They were going to be a family. There was no place for me," I said, and she looked at me worried, but I smiled at her.

"I am glad," I said and placed my hand on my belly. "I found love in the north and everything I ever wanted." I told her, and she smiled.

"Do you know if Leo were Sylvester, then truly you would have nowhere to go? Sylvester is a step up from Leo, but no one is a step up from the Wolf lord. So, in that case, you will be stranded forever, and even if you want to leave him, it would be impossible. Society won't allow it, your family won't allow it, and your heart and wolf will hold on so tight, and it won't allow it. There is something in us that seeks the dominant male," She said, and I wondered why she was saying such things.

"I didn't call you here to discuss your relationship." She said and sighed. I called you here to discuss mine.

"Something my sons did not know was that their father had a fated," she said, and I exclaimed, pretending not to know so she could give me her version of the story.

"Everyone that knew was sworn to secrecy by Maurice. Her name was Alissa Pavlishchev, and she was from Gad in the western region. Only the people in the council and older western Alphas knew of her." She said.

"Maurice loved me wholeheartedly until he met her. He never slept with anyone. Like Sylvester is with you, my husband was that way with me. Maybe not exactly, but you get the picture," she said, and her eyes welled up in tears.

"I loved Maurice with all my heart, and I thought our lives would be rosy, but I was wrong. He met Alissa and took her as his mistress. My family and the

council did not let him claim her because that would insult me, so he slept with her and made me endure unimaginable pain. The woman wasn't a saint, either. They never are. It is not by choice but by design. No fated would want to be a mistress. They see us as taking their space, so they would do anything to replace us fully and not share their mate.

She plotted against me and manipulated my husband.

She was the one that made him start the war frenzy. When my family and part of the council pushed back, Maurice moved to eliminate them to make her Lady and his Luna; I had given up hope. I had Dominic then, and he wasn't an Alpha, so I knew my days with Maurice were numbered. When she got pregnant, I left the estate and returned home with Dominic. Maurice did not look for me. He doted on her and loved her, but he never claimed her. The woman was so wicked that her people refused to come and work in the estate to help her. If you think I am lying, you can investigate. Because of this, Maurice forced me to return and be her midwife. I was maltreated and abused. He would beat me because of her and her lies, and she never ran out of lies. I was tired. If it was a lesser Alpha, I could run, but who would challenge the wolf lord for my sake? I knew I wouldn't be able to leave until he let me go.

The goddess took pity on me and she died giving birth to her son. Maurice lost his mind. First, he said I poisoned her and had me locked up in a cell, but it was proven that she died of a dangerous case of preeclampsia. I was released and asked to care for the child, but I refused. I told Maurice I would not touch his bastard because that was what the boy was. Maurice felt guilty for locking me up, so he did not try to force me to care for the child. Soon he found out all the lies she told about me. When the boy turned one, Maurice found out he had an Alpha wolf, so he sent him to Grizlo in the north to be cared

for by a small family. Around that time, I was pregnant with Sylvester, but things weren't the same. Although Maurice loved me, the loss of his mate destroyed him, and he found himself drawn to women of the west who looked like her, so he started actively keeping a harem. He conquered the entire west for other reasons but took their women so he could replace Alissa briefly. I handled it well, had Sylvester, and when Maurice found that Sylvester was an Alpha, his love for me increased, and Alissa and her son faded away." She said and looked at me.

“That boy’s name is David Pavlishchev. Maurice did not give him his last name because he was a bastard.” She concluded, and I was in shock.

“That bastard was why I left here, Tamia. I went to see if I could find out about his whereabouts because he was the only one that would want to kill my sons. He is the only one who will have something to gain from this. Dominic and Sylvester do not know of his existence. I told Dominic yesterday, he didn’t take it well. That is why I am telling you this so you can help me tell Sylvester. We need to find David and be sure he isn’t behind all this. I do not have proof; I am just speculating, but I know you are good with investigations. I will need you to carry one out for me and figure it out,” She said, but I was too dumbfounded to respond.

~Tamia~

Shock could not describe how I felt after Stephanie had told me everything.

I sat on the couch and stared at her, speechless.

“Why are you trusting me with this level of information, Luna Stephanie?” I asked her, and she wiped away her tears.

Going down memory lane was hard for her, and I could see she loved her husband dearly, just like I loved Leo, and I wouldn’t have let him go.

To be fair to her, I could understand her predicament, which was why I had to let Devin go when he came to me.

I couldn’t be selfish and crush the one person that dared to love me through my pain.

My heart truly belonged to Sylvester. I was lucky.

Stephanie did not have a Sylvester that would sweep her off her feet and rescue her, so she had to deal, but hearing her open up to me like this made me afraid.

I wasn’t her best person; in fact, there was friction between us, and I doubted it would change. For her to tell me this meant she was desperate.

I tried to remain calm while I waited for her to respond.

“I think he is behind this, Tamia,” she said and bowed.

“He might feel cheated. He is an Alpha, and he is older than Sylvester. If he weren’t a bastard, he would have been the lord of the north. I am sure he knows I am the reason Maurice could not marry his

mother properly,” she said, and I wondered if she was speaking from knowledge and not just a hunch. There was no way she wouldn’t know what was going on in this David’s mind if she wasn’t privy to it.

I looked at her for a bit.

“Are you sure about these things?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“I can’t lie about this,” She responded, and I wanted to beg to differ, but I held my tongue.

“You know if I tell Sylvester about this man, he will hunt him down, and there will be no going back from this,” I said and sighed.

“Are you sure he is a threat to my mate?” I asked her, letting her know Sylvester was my first concern, and she nodded. I smiled because I had her right where I wanted her.

“In that case, I need you to come clean about it. Tell me how you are so sure this man is a threat?” I asked her, and she looked at me and nodded her head.

“I do not know how to explain it, Tamia, but I just have a hunch. At least let us find him, and then we will know what to do from there,” She explained, and I understood what she wanted from me.

Stephanie wasn’t sure of her hunch, and she knew Sylvester would not have a subtle approach, and his approach could aggravate this David. She wanted me to tell Sylvester about David and make sure he is subtle about it.

“Very well then..” I said, and just then, I heard Sylvester’s voice in my head.

“Where are you?” He said, and I knew he had woken up and wondered where I had gone.

I got off the couch and looked at my barefoot.

“On my way back to you, darling,” I linked with him, and he was quiet.

“I have to go back,” I told Stephanie, and she nodded and looked at me.

“I am truly happy for both of you. I know it may not seem so, but I am. I am also begging you not to break his heart, Tamia. Susan left my baby wounded, which is why I have been uptight. Please.” She said and looked at my tummy.

“I am sure you two will make a great family,” She said, and I smiled at her.

“I cannot hurt him, Stephanie, and he knows it. I love him with everything I am, and I have turned my back on everything just to be with him. My love and heart are in his hands. I hope he does not break me,” I said, and she could not speak.

I did not owe her the explanation that I had rejected my fated for his sake. That was to remain between Sylvester and me, but she needed to know that I was in my relationship a hundred per cent, and I did not plan on ever letting my man go.

I hugged her and assured her everything would be alright before leaving her room and heading towards mine. I bumped into Lilly on my way, and she looked at my foot.

One thing I noticed was she was lurking around our corridors too much. I know Sylvester was easy on her, but this wasn't her wing.

“Good Evening, Luna,” She said to me, already according me the respect of Luna.

“Hello, Lilly,” I said, and she looked at my barefoot.

“Is that because you are pregnant?” She asked me with a tinge of jealousy, and I smiled.

“No, dear, it is so I can sneak around the place unnoticed,” I said and walked away from her.

I felt her eyes on me, and I turned to wink at her.

I wanted her relaxed and a little bit on edge simultaneously. She was bound to make mistakes faster when on edge than when relaxed.

“I entered the room and went to bed. Sylvester wrapped his arm around me and kissed my neck.

“The bed was cold,” he said, and I turned to look at him.

“Since when did a cold bed start troubling you?” I asked, wanting to laugh.

“When you started sleeping in it, Tamia,” He said in his low deep voice, and it made me shiver in a good way. Sylvester knew how to turn me on, and this was one of those.

He came on top, and I knew the night would be longer than expected.

We had breakfast in the morning with our friends, and Sylvester brought up the investigation.

“I will want us to go through the things in late Jenny’s house,”

Sylvester said, and Marcel looked at him.

“Have you told the Lawrences about it? Especially Vino. She might be occupying a Babanin seat, but she is still his aunt.” Marcel said, and I was a bit surprised that Jenny was Vino’s aunt, but the name was a dead giveaway. She was Jenny Lawrence; I just thought she was a different Lawrence. In light of this, things were a bit confusing in my head.

“I do not need permission, especially when I am trying to figure out why she was killed,” Sylvester said, and Marcel nodded.

“Sign me up,” Linda said immediately, and Theodore looked a bit pissed at her.

I understood why she committed herself quickly because she knew he would try to stop her because of the pregnancy.

“Are you sure it is the best way to go?” Marcel asked Sylvester, and he nodded.

“I knew my mother wasn’t the target of that attack. Jenny might have been involved in something or known something to be eliminated.” Sylvester said, and Marcel sighed.

“What about the wire transfers that Lily was working on? Does it show any funds leading to or from Jenny? We have to check everything knowing that your father almost wiped them out.” Marcel asked.

“They should lead somewhere,” Marcel added, and I remembered her phone call and contemplated bringing it up.

“All those anonymous transfers lead to the south, and now some are going east. I have asked Lily to take a break. I cannot leave her with a computer unattended, and I want to spend time with Tamia. So I will find another way to trace the transfers,” Sylvester said and touched my hand. He kissed it, making my body shake.

“I am worried that some people are stationing people in the east and west. With what has happened recently, I hope an attack that would be blamed on the north will not ensue. We are yet to understand why the transfers and the people they are going to are anonymous. I can’t shake off the fact that everything is directed at destroying my family. The fact that my father had many enemies does not help matters either. I am thinking of reaching out to the distant Volkovs for help,” He confessed, and I touched his hand.

“Very well, what time do we go to Jenny’s house, and how many of us are going?” Theodore asked. Sylvester smiled and kissed my hand again.

“See it more like a date because we are bringing our mates with us,” he said, and Marcel shook his head.

“Avery and I have a doctor’s appointment this morning,” He said, and Sylvester shrugged.

“Go and return. Pending on what the doctor says will determine whether or not Avery will be coming,” He said, and Marcel nodded and thanked him.

After the serious discussion, we returned to our food, and Sylvester could not keep his hands off my body. He got me all worked up that I might have gone on top of him in that room.

He breathed in my scent and ensured his pinewood scent surrounded me. He nibbled my ears and sucked on my sweet spot.

“My mark will be there soon, darling. You will be truly mine,” He linked me, and a faint moan escaped my lips. The room was a bit blurry, and he was getting me worked up.

“I am already yours,” I linked him back, and I felt his tongue brush through, making my body shiver and the hairs on my skin stand because of the goosebumps his action produced.

“Sylvester..” I moaned, and he placed a grape in my mouth, allowing his finger to enter my mouth. I sucked on it to let him know the work I could do to his cock. He felt it because Knight growled, and Kaira purred in my head.

“You two should get a room,” I heard someone say, but I was too far gone to know who did. It was between Linda and Avery.

We finished breakfast, and Sylvester and I returned to our bedroom.

I was wet and horny, but at the same time, I needed to tell him about Lily.

We entered the room, and he rushed at me, ready to take me. As much as I wasn't selfish, he had ignited a fire that needed attention, so I let him go to work on my body.

It was a passion-filled morning, and I confessed to all sorts of things.

He made me say something that I wouldn't have on a typical day while hitting the right spot; with his intoxicating scent and the love I felt in my heart, I could promise him the moon, which wasn't mine to give by the way, but I could hypothetically give it to him because he had taken me there and back and he knew it.

We lay on the bed tired, with my head against his chest. I kissed his chest, and he touched my back gently.

I thought of the few times I heard of him while I was in the east.

If anyone told me he would be the love of my life back then, I wouldn't believe them, but the funny part was there was no day that I judged or resented him. It helped me decide to come to the north, and I was glad I did.

“I need to talk to you about something,” I said, and he made both of us sit so he could look into my eyes. He looked worried, so I smiled at him to be calm.

“Are the women in the Harem allowed to have cell phones?” I asked him, and he froze.

“I can’t let them have cell phones, Tamia; that will defeat the purpose of keeping them in check. They can also betray the north and easily sell information that way,” he said, placing his hand on my cheek. He thought I wanted him to give them cell phones. It was cute.

“I know you are a kind woman, but please do not ask me to give them a phone. Please do not ask me to endanger the north.” He said, and I shook my head and kissed his hand on my cheek by turning towards it. I used my hand to gently hold his palm against my face and closed my eyes to relish the feeling.

“I need you to act rational and wisely about what I am about to tell you. Promise me you won’t lose your shit,” I said, and he looked confused.

“Last night, I decided to check on Avery in her wing, so I left barefoot, knowing my attempt to wear something on my feet would wake you up. While I walked down the hallways, I heard a voice. I hid behind the door to listen; it was Lily talking on a phone. She told someone that things were a bit tight and she couldn’t get something for the person and that the person should wait until during the all-region game when security is loose,” I said, and I saw rage rise in his eyes. Sylvester looked like he was about to kill someone, and I hoped it was nothing for Lily’s sake.

~Sylvester~

I could not believe what Tamia had just told me about Lily.

I was so mad that I knew Knight could emerge.

I looked at my mate, and she did not seem like she was joking.

From the look in her green eyes, it took a lot of effort for her to tell me what she had just divulged.

I raised my hand, patted her head gently, and then kissed her lips. It was more to calm myself down than to tell her I was okay.

I knew I needed to be calm to handle the matter.

Lily was a big problem. If she was betraying me, then I was in trouble because she knew of my investigations, and she was helping me with one of them.

What if she was giving out the information to someone else?

I had always suspected I couldn't trust her, but when she came, she was innocent-looking, and I thought I could have the younger sister I never had.

I revoked her privileges when I heard all the awful things she did to the women in the harem.

I did not want to jump to conclusions, but I wanted to get up and go and find out the truth.

I was about to get up when Tamia stopped me with her hand.

"I have not finished talking to you, darling. Please be calm. I hope there is a rational explanation for what I heard and saw," She said, and I searched her eyes, my soul pleading, hoping that whatever she

needed to tell me next would be easy to digest.

"Here goes," She said and sighed.

"After the incident with Lily, I bumped into your mother." She said, and I held my tongue. I did not want to say anything that would change the topic.

"She was crying, and she requested to speak to me immediately. Of course, I went to see Avery and then returned to your mother's room." She said and squeezed my arm.

"Your mother explained why she left the estate in a hurry that day Dominic was arrested, and what she went to do," she said.

"According to her, your father had a fated called Lady Alissa Pavlishchev," She continued, and I exclaimed. Tamia just nodded gradually and continued what she was saying.

"Your father accepted his fated and made your mother share. She did not have you then, and when the woman was pregnant, your mother left with Dominic. Things happened, and your mother was asked to return to care for her. All the while, he tried to divorce your mother, but her family was too important for him to divorce her successfully, so he started conquering the council families and the west. He wanted to own the world and be powerful enough to overthrow the council and marry this woman. According to your

mother, the woman was evil and did many mean things. Eventually, she died giving birth to her son. This was relieving to your mother, but that was the beginning of your father growing his harem and getting involved with the women in the harem. He only went for women of western descent because they reminded him of his fated. Your father realised the boy was an Alpha, so he tried to get your mother to take care of the baby, but she said no, so he sent the boy to be cared for. She got pregnant with you, and everything became rosy after she gave birth to you, and he discovered you were an Alpha too.” She said and searched my eyes for emotions, but I made sure there was nothing in them so she would have the confidence to tell me the rest.

“When your mother left, it wasn’t an act of defiance, but to find David Pavlishchev, your half-brother, because she believed he might be the culprit. He has so much to gain if anything happens to either of you,” she said, and I knew she was right.

“Did my mother tell you his last known location?” I asked, and she shook her head.

“Very well, I will handle it,” I said, and she smiled.

She laid down a bit, and I held her in bed until she fell asleep.

It was time to go to the only part of the mansion I never visit. The Harem. I linked Theodore to meet me there with two women from my staff.

I kept my anger under control and moved swiftly.

When I got to the common hall of the harem, the entire place was silent. I had never visited there since the women had been brought. The last I was there was when we were actively involved with the former women in the harem before I let all of them go.

Marcel, Theodore and I threw orgies there and partied all night long. Thinking of the life I led back then; I was ashamed of myself and grateful that Tamia brought meaning and love back into my life because Susan left with everything, and I was nothing but an empty shell.

Most of the ladies were looking at me seductively, and I ignored them. My eyes searched and found Lily, who smiled at me.

I motioned her to come to me, and she approached eagerly.

“Take me to your bedroom,” I said, and I heard some women gasp. I knew what they were thinking, but I did not owe anyone any explanation.

We waited for Theodore to join us before leaving. I could see the giddiness in Lily’s eyes, and I remained silent.

“I hope Luna Tamia won’t be mad about this Alpha. I do not want to anger luna,” She said with a sly tone, and I wanted to hit her, but I controlled myself. If what Tamia said checked out, she would have betrayed me beyond repair. I was holding my temper.

“What is going on?” Theodore linked me.

“Be attentive,” was all I could manage, and he was silent.

We got to Lily’s room which she shared with two other girls, and I entered.

The room was beautifully furnished, and three beds were placed in it. Beside each bed was a vanity table. It looked like a luxurious hostel, which was the point, and Lilly stood with her head bowed.

I knew what she was thinking, and she began to undo her tunic to confirm my suspicion. I could feel her joy and expectation. I had never given her the sign that I wanted anything sensual with her, but I knew it was a fantasy in her head, and it almost cost me my relationship with Tamia.

“Keep your clothes on,” I ordered quietly. She looked confused but nodded.

“I am at your service, Alpha,” She said with her head bowed.

“Where is your bed?” I asked, and she eagerly pointed to the bed close to the wall. I linked the women that came with us to search through her things.

Lily became apprehensive immediately.

“What is going on, Alpha?” She said, looking worried.

“Hold her, Theodore,” I told my Gamma, and he did as I had said.

“Where is the phone, Lily?” I asked her and her eyes widened.

“Do not bother lying because people told me you have one. Where did you put it?” I asked her, and she bowed her head and began to sob.

“Where is it!” I yelled, feeling my anger bubbling to the surface at the realisation that there was indeed a phone and Tamia was right.

“Inside the mattress under my bed,” She confessed. The women lifted her mattress, and there the phone was.

They brought it to me, and it had no number and no messages, but the call log had an anonymous caller on it. The person was wise to hide their caller identity when calling.

“How did you get this?” I asked her calmly, and she sobbed. I tried to hold my temper because I knew I could kill her.

“What have you given them?” I asked her, and she continued to cry.

“Answer me!” I yelled with my authority, and she shook.

She struggled and broke away from Theodore and went on her knees.

“I am sorry, Alpha. I am sorry. They promised I would go home but threatened they would wipe my family out if I did not comply,” she said without answering my question.

“Do not test my patience, Lily. What did you give them, and who were you speaking to?” I asked her, and she began to sob.

“They did not give me a name. Sometimes it was a woman and sometimes a man,” She said, and I grabbed her neck and squeezed.

“What did you give them?” I asked, angry.

“Sylvester?” I heard Tamia’s voice in my head, and I cursed under my breath because I wasn’t expecting her to be awake.

“Sylvester?” I heard her voice again, and I released Lilly’s neck.

“Yes, darling, I am in Lily’s room; you are right,” I said, and she did not reply. I knew she was on her way.

“What did you give them?”

“Banking details, signatures, royal seals, envelopes, and I placed a backdoor on your computer to help them monitor what you were doing,” She said quickly, and I slapped her.

She fell to the ground. I was enraged.

Chapter 54 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna

~Tamia~

Everyone was elated by the news except for Sylvester. I could see he was happy, but he squeezed my hand gently.

“Thank you, doctor, but why is she ill? Linda is pregnant, and she isn’t ill,” He said, and I could understand his reaction to the news.

“People experience pregnancy differently, but I will still take her blood sample to test for other things. If there is anything, she is already recovering from it. I will give her a mild sedative to help her relax and sleep it off, but there is no cause for alarm here. She will be alright when she wakes up; she just needs to rest,” He said.

“I will administer a mild sedative to help her rest”, he added.

The doctor administered the medication and left. Leaving Sylvester, Avery and me in the bedroom.

My eyes became heavy, and I fell asleep.

I woke up to see Sylvester lying beside me in bed and working on his computer. I groaned, and he looked at me and smiled.

He put his computer on the nightstand and kissed my forehead.

“If you were a child, I would have said you were grounded,” He said with a tinge of anger, and I understood.

His eyes were teary, and he was fighting his emotions.

“Anything could have happened to you out there, Tamia. Anything. Why would you keep something so significant from me?” He asked, and I gradually sat up.

“Had I told you I was throwing up and feeling feverish, you would not have allowed me to go, and I did not trust the council to do your bidding in the west,” I said, and he bowed his head and then looked at me.

“How are you feeling now?” He asked and placed his hand gently on my belly.

His touch felt good against my skin, and I wanted his hand to linger.

Kaira was silent because she was ashamed of what we did and what she almost allowed to happen. I understood her shame.

“Don’t do this again. Always tell me what you are going through, Tamia. We will get through it together no matter how terrible it is,” He said, and I nodded.

“So we will be parents soon,” he said with a broad grin, and I smiled at him.

I felt like shit.

How would I tell him I saw Devin and we made out? How would I tell him he was my fated, but I rejected him? How?

“Please don’t,” Kaira pleaded with me, afraid.

I understood her fear because making out with Devin and almost allowing him to claim us felt like a great betrayal.

“How were things over there?” he asked, and I told him everything Alpha Jake told me about the attack.

He took off his shirt and snuggled into bed beside me to hold me.

I felt at peace when he wrapped his arms around me and enveloped me with his scent. I held him resting my head on his chest, and looked up at him.

“I love you, Sylvester. Please don’t break my heart,” I said in tears, and he frowned. He was surprised at my sudden mood.

“I can never hurt you, Tamia,” He said and placed my hand on his chest to feel his heartbeat.

“I cannot live without you.” He said.

“If your fated shows up, what would you do?” I asked, and he sat up gently. I gently sat up, too, and he looked at me.

“I make my destiny, Tamia, and I choose you and our baby. She would have shown up late. I have given everything to you, Tamia; I have nothing to give her,” he said, and I bowed my head, knowing how strong the pull was and how Leo failed.

Devin was a gentleman, unlike Amanda, who was persistent. Devin respects my wishes; what if his fated is like Amanda, persistent?

“What if the pull is so strong and you can’t say no?” I asked him, tears streaming down my face.

“I will prove that my love is stronger than the legendary pull of the mate bond. I will choose you over and over again. You have nothing to worry about. Soon we will be married and welcome our baby into the world. My fated has no room in my life,” he said with conviction.

“Your mother hates me, Sylvester. What if she interferes?” I said, and he shook his head.

“My mother doesn’t hate you, and she can never make me do anything I do not want to do,” He said and lifted my hand and kissed it.

“This is it,” he said, pulling me close to kiss him.

His lips felt so good on mine, and I opened up to receive the goodness he was giving. Erasing Devin’s kiss.

I kissed him hungrily, wanting to feel every bit of him, knowing this was it for me.

My heart was beating fast. A mixture of joy and uncertainty.

He travelled with his lips to my neck and sucked.

I wanted him to sink his teeth in and seal the deal.

I wanted to disregard tradition and just go for it. I held his head tightly, and he growled and groaned. He was fighting Knight, and I did not want him to.

Kaira gave me strength, and I straddled him and opened my robe.

He went for my breasts with his lips, and I looked up, pushing my chest to give him access.

He worshipped them and paid attention. I felt his bulge, and I wanted him to seal the deal.

He gently flipped our positions and got off the bed, leaving me gasping for air and disappointed.

“You need to rest, Tamia. I want you so badly that if I go ahead now, I will claim you,” He confessed, and I took off my robe completely.

“I do not care, Sylvester. I am already yours,” I said, and his eyes went completely dark.

He had entered a battle he would lose because Knight charged back to the bed and kissed me hungrily; he moved down my body fast and went between my legs.

“Mine,” he growled his famous words.

The words that brought me back from the trance.

The words that helped me keep my promise and gave me control.

I welcomed the words and opened wider for him.

He teased my knob with his tongue and then looked at me to be sure I was seeing what he was doing. He sucked gently, and I moaned. He looked at me again.

“I won’t be able to control myself,” He told me, and I shook my head.

”Then don’t,” I said, and he knelt between my legs and drove his cock into me.

He growled and began to pump fast and hard.

I welcomed it, but a part of me said I was wrong.

He should know...

He should know, and just like that, my body went cold, and I began to cry.

Sylvester gently pulled out and lifted my face to look at him.

“What is the matter, green eyes?” He said with concern, and my tears fell freely.

“I did something bad, Sylvester, and I am afraid you will hate me for it,” I said, and he froze.

“What did you do, Tamia?” He asked gently. I knew he was controlling himself.

He stood up from the bed, and I looked at him, afraid.

“What happened?” He said, and my tears fell freely.

“I...I...I...,” I said, stuttering between sobs.

“I saw Devin at the festival,” I said. He clenched his fists, and his hands began to shake. His eyes darkened instantly, and I could see anger rise in them. There was no going back from this.

“He was my Fated,” I said, and Knight began to growl. I could feel the pressure of his presence.

“I did not know until last night, Sylvester. I swear. I did not know. He said it was because of Leo’s mark,” I said, rushing through the words, but his growls became louder.

“The pull was strong and intoxicating, and we made out,” I confessed, and he roared. I wiped away my tears.

“He almost claimed me, but I rejected him. I rejected him. It took a lot of effort, but I rejected him,” I said and looked at him.

“I had nothing to give him. He accepted because he realised that my heart belonged to you. It was hard, but he accepted it.” I said and began to weep.

He approached me on the bed, and my heart was pounding from fear. I thought he would do something crazy, but he hugged me tightly and kissed my neck.

“It’s okay, darling. It’s okay. You didn’t do anything wrong. You did not betray me. You did something most people are incapable of; you honoured me and kept your promise,” He said and sucked the soft spot of my neck.

“You have nothing to be ashamed of. You and Kaira have nothing to be ashamed of,” he said, looking at me with his black wolf eyes.

“Thank you, Tamia, thank you for coming back to me,” he said, tears streaming down his face. He was afraid.

“Your sacrifice will not be in vain, Tamia. I promise I will never do anything to make you regret choosing me instead of your fated. I promise you.” He said, and I nodded; tears of fear and uncertainty streamed down my face, and he hugged me and kissed my neck.

“I am yours, Tamia. My heart, body and soul. You will never have to share me with anyone. I will never hurt or betray you. I will never touch anyone else until I die. It will only be you now and always. Just you, Tamia and no one else. I love you,” he said and arrested my lips with his.

He laid me down gently on the bed and gradually used his tongue to leave a trail of pleasure on my skin. Tracing from my neck to my core. He sucked on my mound gently, and all the fear I felt was replaced with pleasure; the load was lifted, and I felt light.

I came immediately, and he placed himself in me and pumped. His eyes were dark, and Kaira took over.

He pumped and pumped, and I came several times. Even though we weren’t fated, I hoped this was it.

We lay in the bed naked, and Sylvester cracked many jokes about what his mother did when she returned.

According to him, she was hurt he didn’t come after her. She wanted to go missing, and he would come and beg her, and then she will make her demands as her condition to return. When that didn’t happen, she returned and accused him of abandoning her and choosing me over her. The woman was just unbelievably petty. Sylvester wanted me to forgive her, but I bore no grudge against her, to begin with. I had just decided that I would be careful around her.

Stephanie had said hurtful and mean things to me. It wasn't okay. It wasn't okay for her to switch and insult my friends and me because she was hurt. It wasn't okay.

I could understand Sylvester's willingness to forgive her; she was his mother, but I couldn't.

After what Jake had told me, I planned on investigating her too.

I knew the woman was hiding something and was determined to find it out.

"Dominic and Bryce will be tried tomorrow. Do you think you can join me?" He asked, and I searched his eyes.

"With Stephanie around?" I asked him, and he laughed.

"She won't trouble you. She knows what you did for Dominic.." He said, and I interrupted him.

"I didn't do it for her. I did it for you and the love of truth. She shouldn't get it twisted. The things she said to me still hunts me. Calling me and my friends social climbers and eastern whores.." I said, and Sylvester touched my hand and kissed it.

"You aren't any of those things.." he said, and I nodded.

"I know I am none of those things, Sylvester, but it isn't alright that she calls us names. It isn't easy being here. If it weren't for the love we found with you, Marcel and Theodore, Avery, Linda and me would not have it easy mentally. It isn't okay," I said, and he pulled me close.

"I am sorry about the condition in which you were brought here, Tamia. I will never take prisoners again. It is a tradition that I am ready to abolish, but I will want you with me tomorrow," He said, and I nodded.

"With pleasure," I said, and we both smiled.

I knew the trial would be tedious because I suspected the culprit of being in the council. If not, the entire panel and Vino was too weak and scared to do their job.

~Tamia~

“That went well,” Kaira said, purring in my head as Sylvester walked to the bathroom naked.

I stared at his chiselled body, and it made me groan. How could someone be carved so perfectly? Tight butt cheeks, define calves. His muscles flexed, and his tattoo was masterfully done.

“How did we end up with such a hottie?” Kaira said, and I had to shut my horny wolf up because Leo was hot too but not this hot.

Kaira was a complete contrast from a few hours ago when she was panicking about our make-out session with Devin.

I wondered how Devin was doing and if he had indeed moved on. I hoped so because the last thing I wanted was for him to feel cheated.

“Come over,” I heard Sylvester in my head, and I left the bed naked and went into the bathroom. He laid in the tub with water and asked me to sit between his legs so he could wash me.

I got in with him, and he kissed my shoulder, which made me moan. He lathered the sponge and began to wash my skin. I knew I was being pampered, so I relished the moment. Taking everything in and letting him spoil me.

Morning came, and we had our breakfast together.

Everyone congratulated me, and I noticed Avery was a bit affected by it. She was happy for me, but she was sad for herself.

I touched her hand lightly to encourage her, and she knew that I knew.

Soon we left the place and got ready to go to the council hall.

Stephanie approached us on our way out, and I was a bit uncomfortable.

I did not know what to tell her, but I chose to be civil for Sylvester’s sake.

“Good morning, dear Tamia,” she said, and I smiled at her in response.

“Congratulations. Thanks to you I will soon be a grandma,” She said, looking genuinely happy, and I smiled at her, not wanting to say anything.

She touched my hand and patted it lightly.

"We should talk when you return," she said gently with pleading eyes. I did not want to be alone in a room with her, but I knew Sylvester won't see anything wrong with it, so I nodded.

"As long as the conversation does not include my doom and slurs, I will make room," I said, and Sylvester chuckled.

She pulled me into a hug.

"I am sorry for all the hurtful things I said to you," She said. Because she didn't strike me as the type to eat her words, I was wary of her apology, but I accepted it for Sylvester's sake. I did not want him to feel torn between his mother and me, but I had questions for her and hoped she would be truthful enough to answer them.

We walked away, and a vehicle was waiting for us.

Usually, Sylvester used his jeep; I wondered why he opted to have a driver drive us in a car. We got into the backseat, and he held me.

"A car?" I said, and he nodded.

"No one drives my jeep, and I want to hold you all through," He said and kissed my neck.

"I still can't believe you rejected your fated for me. You have proven to me that true love exists," he said, and I looked at him and searched his eyes. The driver started the vehicle and moved.

"I was scared you would be mad," I confessed, and he shook his head.

"I wasn't growling from anger, green eyes; I was growling from fear. Ever since the attack on the northern gates, I have feared that Devin would take you from me. What you told me has now put my mind at peace," He said and touched my belly lightly.

"I want to claim you so badly, and I doubt I can wait until the blue moon. If I did not need the blue moon for it to work, I would have done it last night. I

want us to be connected on all levels, Tamia; I want you inside me. I want you to share my soul, and I share yours,” he said, and we kissed.

We finally arrived at the council hall and went to sit in Sylvester’s box. Everyone was there, Avery, Marcel, Theodore and Linda. On the floor at the centre was a broken version of Dominic, a very afraid Bryce and a furious version of Larry.

I knew Larry shouldn’t be there, but Sylvester wanted to humiliate the man and make him suffer.

He was justified to do so because the man tried to use Dominic to work against him.

The sooner Dominic realises the enemy is from without, the better.

Vino greeted Sylvester and acknowledged our presence, then handed over to Jacob Mikhailov, the council spokesman.

“I speak on behalf of the council when I say you have overstepped your bounds, my lord,” The man said, and Sylvester was silent.

“Civil and criminal matters are overseen by the council. You have abused your power by holding the prisoners in your custody and choosing to preside over this case. We hereby ask you to withdraw and only observe as we deal with the matters.” He said, and Sylvester raised his hand and signalled the man to be seated.

“Tell me of the council’s investigations and findings first before I respond to your demand,” He said calmly.

Pamela, who I had slowly started to hate, stood up to speak.

“What more is there to know? Enforcer Golubev has confessed the truth. We are here for sentencing,” she said, and I could feel Sylvester’s rage.

“If it was possible to unseat this council, I will. This council has failed woefully in their duty. Was it not this council that accused me of being wicked without investigating the allegation against me? And now you have done the same. Unfortunately, I will decide on this one because my brother is involved. I have done some investigations, and here are my findings. Enforcer Golubev has confessed that he was blackmailed into framing Dominic Volkov. We are in

possession of the letter he received from the culprit instructing him to go to the East and cause trouble, and name Dominic as the culprit. In exchange, his pregnant mate will be returned safe and sound.” he said, and people exclaimed.

“We have the letter,” I said, “and I have made copies for you to see.”

“May we see it?” Council Woman Joan Clayman said, and Sylvester nodded.

“What use is this council when it fails to do the needful? I think that there are people actively working against my family and me. And because of this, I will be presiding over every decision until further notice.” He said, and they began to murmur.

“That is wrong; our family fought for this together. You might be a Royal, but we all share in this...” Pamela said, and Sylvester nodded.

“That is why I have not ordered the arrest of every council member. I hope you all have no hand in this because it is disturbing that you do not investigate and are quick to condemn and destroy what is mine. My brother would have been sentenced and executed for nothing. I want this council to focus on finding the culprit behind this. My Luna and I know that Jenny was the target of the attack that took her life, not my mother; I want this council to spend their precious time figuring out why. I want this council to reduce my workload for me. If I have to get involved with the investigations, I will water down the council’s power. According to the law, I can do it,” he said, and they were all quiet. I noticed some of them look at me scornfully.

“With all due respect, your Eminence, Lunas are not allowed in the council hall, and they are not allowed to preside over matters. Their duty is to make sure the Volkov bloodline always has an heir. You are not married to this woman yet; it will be advisable to keep her out of our business for now,” Joan said, and I knew what they were implying. I always wondered why Stephanie never came; now I know why.

“Well, not in my Epoch,” Sylvester said and stood up.

“How many of you can boast of having Tamia Riverstorm Albert’s achievements added to their belts? She is a strategist, an analyst, a warrior and one of the best investigators in our world. If that does not qualify her to sit

in this box, observe, interfere and decide over matters, then I don't know what would," he said and sat down.

"I will not repeat myself. Let this be the last time any of you will speak of my Luna as if she is an outsider and an object. I will take it as an insult to my person, and I will not take it easy regardless of your family." He said and sighed.

I looked at them, and they were silent. Some of them looked at me scornfully, except for Vino, who was smiling at me. I returned his smile, and he nodded.

They read the photocopied letter that Sylvester had passed to them, and they were silent. Then Pamela moved to question Bryce, and he was honest. She asked him if anyone was coerced.

"Are you sure you speak the truth, Enforcer?" She asked him, and Bryce kept his head down.

"I feared they would kill my wife and our unborn child. The instructions were clear. I was to get to the Volkov estate so it would seem like I had a meeting with Lord Dominic. I was to go to the East and state that the council sent me under Lord Volkov's orders to collect development tax. I was asked to be rude and threaten the head Alpha of the East, and when I was asked who sent me, I was to tell this council it was lord Dominic Volkov. That is the truth," The man said, and Pamela nodded.

"So, what made you tell the truth?" She asked him.

"My Lord and Lady interrogated me in the council prison and figured out I was lying. I had to give up the pretence and tell the truth," he confessed, and Pamela shook her head.

"Are you sure you were not coerced by Lady Tamia?" She asked, and I would have slapped her if I had been close to her. Suddenly I began to feel the woman loathed me. I wondered what I did to these people.

She was now high on my investigation list. She better be clean, or I would disgrace her and make sure she loses her seat. I will make an example of the bitch. I was pissed off.

I felt Sylvester's hand on my thighs, and he touched it gently and smiled at me.

“Calm down, green eyes,” he pleaded with me, and I nodded.

“I wasn’t threatened or coerced by my Lady.” Enforcer Bryce said, and the woman kept quiet. I thought she would dare to ask if Sylvester coerced him, but she didn’t. The bitch.

“Very well then, I doubt there is any need for a trail,” Vino said, and people were silent.

“I hereby acquit Dominic Volkov of all the allegations made against him. I also acquit Councilman Larry McMillian Babanins of the suspicion of conniving with Dominic to commit treason.” Vino said, and I remembered the Babanins as one of the families that Maurice took out, according to Jake Brighton. I kept a mental note of it.

Some enforcers went to release Dominic and Larry from the chains. Dominic walked away with his head bowed, feeling ashamed. Likewise Larry, but I noticed something while they walked; Dominic kept his distance from Larry. Locked up for a few days, death looming over his head made Dominic rethink certain things.

Soon I saw Dominic come to join us in our box. I was uncomfortable, but he was Sylvester’s brother.

“Enforcer Bryce Golubev, you have lied against royalty. You committed an offence that would have cost the man his life. You also misled this council, which is an act of treason. As a result, we sentence you to death by beheading.” Vino pronounced with a tinge of anger, and I squeezed Sylvester’s lap.

“Do not let them kill him. This will not be the end of people plotting against you. The next person will never tell the truth if Bryce loses his life,” I said quickly, and Sylvester stopped the enforcers from taking Bryce away.

“No one is going to die by beheading,” Sylvester said comfortably, and Dominic growled. I could understand Dominic’s anger, but Bryce had no choice.

“He spoke up and told the truth. He could have also maintained his lie, which would have saved him from punishment. But he told the truth and, in turn, saved my brother and councilman Larry from being

sentenced for treason. As a result, I pardon him and move him to work at the Volkov estate. I would rather surround myself with honest people than connivers," Sylvester said, and the council murmured.

"The law, your Eminence," Pamela said, and Sylvester shook his head.

"I choose mercy," he said, and the woman looked at me. Her eyes showed she knew I was the one that instigated it. I needed to find a way to clip her wings before she became a problem for me. As things were, Vino was the only council member who did not hate me.

~Devin~

I decided to attend Jake's festival to unwind. It was a last-minute decision. I planned to spend four days in Brighton and then return to Greenwood. It was a great plan. It was supposed to ease my stress and help me think straight.

When I arrived in Brighton in the evening of the festival and Jake told me that Tamia was around, I was giddy. Rex was overjoyed, and I could not believe how easy it would be to take my mate away from Sylvester. Hearing that Sylvester sent her to have a peace talk with Jake unaccompanied made me think of two different extremes.

Either they loved and trusted each other so much that he would allow her to handle state matters without fear, or her life meant nothing. He was willing to gamble it away by using her to apologise to Jake, hoping Jake won't attack and kill her.

Hearing Jake talk about her made me realise she was alright.

He told me she arrived a bit ill and pale looking, and I was afraid Sylvester maltreated her in the north.

I planned it all.

The rose, the garden. I wanted it to be perfect. I wanted it to be romantic. It is all I have ever wanted. Finding my mate and starting a real life in love and happiness.

Tamia was perfect. I did not care that she was once married or was taken by the wolf lord. I did not care. I just wanted my mate.

Rex hoped to hold her, accept her and claim her. I wasn't going to waste any time.

I was going to run fast and sink my teeth into her.

I did not need to wait for the blue moon; that was only done by chosen mates for the claiming to work.

I did not need the blue moon to claim my mate. The moon goddess had given her to me.

So I used my scent to lure her.

She scented Peach and Wildflowers. Her scent was vivid and more precise than when we first met at the party.

She was delicious, and she was mine. I hoped she would follow, and she did.

When she saw me and tears started streaming down her cheeks, I knew it wouldn't be easy.

Everything she said to me in tears broke my heart. Not because she refused to run into my arms, but because what she was saying was true.

I took my moment with her for granted. I wronged her deeply.

I knew she was hurting with Leo, and I should have challenged him for her hand, but I was diplomatic about it. I made the biggest mistake of my life.

I should have taken her from him that night. I took our moment for granted, and Volkov stole her heart.

I could not blame her for rejecting me. But deep down, she should have given me a chance to prove myself.

No pain or weakness came with the rejection, but the feeling was the same.

I knew she battled her wolf to let me go. As much as I wanted to be persistent, I had to respect her wishes. I lost my chance, and I hated myself for it. Rex did not forgive me for accepting the rejection.

We actually thought she would let us claim her. The feeling was right. It felt so good, and I wanted to sink my teeth into her neck, but she pulled away. I could not force myself on her.

I left Brighton the next day a broken man.

Throughout my journey back to Greenwood, my wolf howled, blaming me for the loss and rejection. He, too, was right.

When I held her in my arms at the party, he urged me to throw away the alliance and challenge Leo for her hand. Her eyes were sad and withdrawn. I should've listened to my wolf, but I didn't.

I wanted the marriage to end naturally because they weren't ready to let each other go, even though Amanda had come between them. I know Leo still feels the same way.

I got home and thought I wouldn't long for her anymore, but I still wanted her. I remembered how it felt to have her in my arms, and I wished things were different and she didn't fall in love with Volkov.

"What will we do now?" Rex asked me, still mourning our loss.

"I do not know, but I think we shouldn't be quick to move on. Tamia does not like to share, and knowing the history of the Volkovs, they always have more than one woman. I plan on waiting a bit to see how things go between them." I told my wolf, and he was silent.

I wasn't going to actively try to separate them, but I was afraid she might lose on his side too. There was no way he could be different from his father. I had to make sure I remained available a little longer for her sake.

"I say we wage war and take her from him. The goddess made her for us. She is ours. He has stolen what is ours," Rex said, and tears streamed down my face.

"She is in love with him, Rex. We can't beat that. The only thing we can do is wait them out. He might slip up, and if he does, I will be there for her, even if it is as a friend, but this can't be it," I said, trying to convince myself there was hope.

My day went slow, and I returned to Greenwood more depressed than I had left.

A day later, I was sitting in my office when Lukman, my beta, brought me an invitation from the Northern Council.

“We hereby invite your pack to partake in our tournament starting next month’s new moon. The open competitions are Polo, Swimming, Football, Golf, Croquet, Volleyball, One Hundred Metre Dash and Ring Fight (without any presence of Silver). Please reply with the list of sports you are interested in and the name of your team members. Thank you, and we look forward to hosting you,” it read, and I looked at the person that sent the invitation.

“From the Northern Council, Signed Joan Clayman. ”

It was strange that the northern council would invite me to participate in the all-region sports games. They usually invite lesser southern Alphas, but they had chosen to invite me this year. I contemplated whether I should accept or not.

“Weirdly, the council would invite us, knowing we have an issue with the lord,” Lukman said. I even had more issues with the Lord because Volkov had stolen the heart of my fated.

“Should we take part in it?” Lukman asked, and I did not know what to say.

Usually, I would say no, but it also meant I would see Tamia one more time before her wedding.

It meant I could officially spend a month in the north without having any hindrances because the tournament takes that long before we complete.

The Polo alone takes two weeks. It would be a great opportunity.

“Do you know if Volkov is participating?” I asked Lukman, and he nodded.

“He plays Polo every year.” He said, and I began to grin from ear to ear.

“Do we have a good Polo team?” I asked him, and he nodded.

“Nikolas Sullivan has a good team. He is a northerner but relocated to the south eleven years ago with his niece. I am sure they would participate in the

north as a southern team against Volkov's team." He said, and I began to grin because this would be an excellent opportunity to spend time with Tamia.

As much as I hated to think of it, she would be around Sylvester often, and if he played Polo, we would be around each other often.

It will give me a chance.

I need to prove that I am a better man for her. I did not plan on playing dirty, but I planned on making an effort. If I still lose, I would gracefully bow out, but I would try as penance for not taking her away from Leo when I had the chance.

Somehow I knew it was my fault she ended up in the north. If I had taken her from Leo, the north would have still attacked the east, but she wouldn't be there to give herself up. She would have been with me.

I looked at Lukman, grateful for the opportunity that had dropped on my lap, and I wasn't going to waste it.

"Ask Nikolas Sullivan to see me in my office. I need to finalise with him and respond to the Northern council as soon as possible before the slots for Polo teams are filled." I told Lukman, and he went to sort the matter.

I waited nervously in my office, grateful for the opportunity.

Knowing the invitation came in late because most Alphas received their invites two weeks ago, it seemed like a last-minute thing. I believed I wasn't meant to be invited, but they chose to invite me for reasons known to them.

I felt it was off that the council would invite me, but it might be their step toward making peace with me. After all, Sylvester had sent Tamia to Brighton to make peace with Jake, and he had somehow made peace with Leo.

Leo never spoke scornfully of the Dark Alpha, and I believe he should because the man took his wife, whom he still loves, but Leo seemed to be okay with it. Volkov might have suddenly realised the errors of their ways and wanted to make amends, or this might also be an attempt to keep his enemies close. I did not know what it may be, but I was on alert. If it was a trap, I had to get out of it. If it weren't for my need to see Tamia again and try to prove myself to her, I would have declined.

Nikolas arrived a few hours later, and he had brought his niece. Lukeman had sent a helicopter to pick him up from Pridewood, where they were staying. It wasn't far, but they would have taken longer to get to Greenwood.

The man looked fit and a bit younger than I imagined. He was in his early forties, and I was sure he could swing a mallet with ease. His niece was a pretty blonde woman, roughly twenty-six or twenty-seven. She was very stunning and had that legendary northern beauty.

I stood up to greet them, and they greeted me with a lot of respect. His niece seemed in awe of me and made me feel like a celebrity.

"Please, make yourselves comfortable," I said, offering them seats, and they sat down.

"To what do we owe this honour, alpha?" Nikolas asked, and I smiled so he would know to relax and that I meant well.

"I heard you have the best Polo team in the south," I said, and the man smiled, trying to be modest.

"We try alpha, but it isn't a popular game in the south as it is in the north," he said, and I nodded.

"I know you relocated here with your niece from the north. I was hoping your team could represent us in the all-region tournament starting next new moon," I said, and the man was stunned. He could not contain his joy.

"It will be an honour. I have been looking for an opportunity to showcase my teams. It will be great," The man said, and I looked at his niece, who seemed to be drooling over me, and I smiled at her.

"You play too?" I asked her, and she nodded.

"Yes, she does, but she won't play at the tournament. She isn't qualified to play at that level; she will just manage the teams," The man said, and I had no clue what it entailed, but it sounded like a good thing.

"How many teams would we enter into the competition?" I asked the man.

"Three. We have only three strong teams in the south," He said, and I nodded.

“Very well then, I will reply and ask them to save three slots for us in the polo tournament. I will need the names of your teams and team members,” I told the man, and he nodded, smiling.

“They will give you a place to rest, and the helicopter will take you back to Pridewood tomorrow,” I said, and the man was excited about it.

I was excited, too, because I had a non-threatening legal reason to be in the north for a whole month. Rex and I were elated, and I relaxed a bit on my couch, hopeful.

~Tamia~

Dominic locked himself in his room for three days after we returned from the council hearing.

I knew it was shame and fear.

Somehow the man did not expect that to happen to him.

I believed realising that he could easily lose his life woke him up.

I wondered how his relationship with Larry would be henceforth.

I knew the council was working against the Volkovs, but we needed to find out who the mastermind was and why, so I decided to start from the beginning.

I went to Sylvester’s office, and he was deep in thought, concentrating on the documents on his desk. Realising some people were actively working against him put him on edge.

Initially, it was based on speculation, but now it was apparent.

Whoever threatened Bryce was either the mastermind or part of the clique.

I looked at him and realised he needed a break.

I had to clear my throat for him to realise I had entered his office. It was either he was far away in his mind or so used to my scent that he did not think I had come in. Either way, he looked up and smiled at me.

“Hey,” he said, and I smiled and looked at him.

“I want to talk to you, but first, let’s go horse riding. I want to go back to the cliff where I can see the alpiners,” I said, and he smiled at me, but his eyes looked tired.

“How about we do that tomorrow, darling? I am busy. Besides, it would be best if you weren’t riding in your condition; I will drive the jeep there. Maybe have a picnic?” he asked, and I laughed.

“But I am allowed to ride you...” I said, and his wolf flashed

“I want us to go now; you need a break, Sylvester. It would help if you unwound so you can think straight. Everyone is going crazy. Marcel and Theodore look like you. Dominic has locked himself inside his room, and your mother is confused. We all need a break, and I want to take it now, with you, at the cliff.” I insisted, and he closed the file on his desk and put it away in a silver safe.

It amazes me how comfortable the northerners were around Silver. They trained with it and used it as storage for essential things. It was mid-bugging. The silver was not in the same space as him but was enclosed in an iron cupboard to prevent it from weakening the people in the room.

Sylvester followed me to the room, and I was glad he listened.

We returned to our bedroom to change our outfits.

“What did you want to tell me other than going to the cliff?” He said, and I smiled at him while I changed into something comfortable.

“I think we should send proper investigators to search Jenny’s house and go through her belongings. Avery, Linda and I can lead it. There are specific things that I am looking for that the people we send might miss, and we are bored sitting doing nothing,” I said, and he was silent; then he went to sit on the bed and started unbuttoning his shirt.

The sight of his bare chest might stop us from making it to the cliff because I was already getting turned on by his stripping gesture alone.

“What are you looking for?” he asked.

“Journals, notes, emails, scribbles, objects...things that can tell a story,” I said, and he took off his shirt, flexing his muscles.

He was so hot that I could no longer concentrate on what I was doing.

I wanted to run my fingers against his chest and feel his muscles. He was mine, all mine, and I wanted him.

“Sylvester,” I asked him, drooling over the sight of his body. He looked at me with a question in his eyes.

“What a hot body you have,” I said to him, and he laughed.

We both laughed; just like that, his spirit was lifted, and his mood was lighter.

“The better to seduce you with, my dear,” He said, and we both laughed because I was playing the role of little red, and he was my big bad wolf.

I could not handle my hormones anymore.

We could talk about Jenny after. But the cliff would have to wait for another day. I went to straddle him on the bed and opened my shirt.

“You need to finish the talk, darling. The wolf desires to eat little red riding hood. Unlike her, I am willing to be devoured,” I said, and he gently touched my tits and sucked them gently in his mouth, swirling his tongue on them.

They were sensitive and hard, and I moaned. I wanted more, something was starving in me, and I needed him to satisfy it.

“I will eat you until you beg me to stop,” he said with a low growl and flipped me unto the bed.

He kissed my neck and nibbled my ears, sucking the lobe and breathing into it. I had goosebumps all over, and my pussy was clenching violently.

“Oh, Sylvester. Please,” I pleaded with him.

My body craved him, aching for his touch, tongue, and cock. My core was aching for release.

He worshipped my body with his mouth and travelled down, sucking and licking my skin, leaving a trail of ecstasy, anticipation, need, desire and want. I dug my nails into the sheet, anticipating him.

“Sylvester,” I moaned, and he kissed my lips but avoided my clit. He was teasing me.

“Ahhh,” I moaned from anticipation and lack of patience.

“I need it now,” I said, trying to press my thighs together to ease the ache.

“Tell me what you want, Tamia,” He growled lowly.

“I want you to eat me until I can take no more, then fuck me until I come all over you,” I said, moaning and writhing under him.

I wasn't a shy woman, and now he knew. I could be vocal when I wanted, and I wanted those things and more.

“Now, Sylvester,” I said, my pussy dripping and anticipating his attention and care.

“Prove to me that you are my big bad wolf,” I said, and he growled and dug in.

He licked my knob and travelled down my slit to my pussy.

“Ahhhhhhhh, Sylvester,” I cried.

I was extra sensitive, and he knew it.

“Do not cum until I tell you to,” He ordered, and I nodded, waiting to see how long I could hold out against his skilful tongue. His skill was unparalleled.

“Sylvester,” I cried, wanting to cum so he could bury himself in me. I wanted to feel his skin against mine. I wanted to wrap myself in his scent.

He worked on me until I could no longer take it.

“Please, Alpha...” I moaned, and he growled with satisfaction.

“Cum,” he linked me.

I released and felt the climax ripple through my veins.

My nerves tingled, and my hair was probably standing.

I felt like my spirit was going to jump out on me, and I stretched, then began to crumble from the over- sensitivity of my clit that he refused to let go of.

Sylvester placed his finger in me, kneaded my walls sweetly, then placed himself in and began to pump.

He pounded into me like a beast. Stretching my walls and satisfying my need for him. Everything was heightened, and I was enjoying it.

I dug my nails into his skin and took it all.

Placing my legs over his shoulder and kneeling between my legs, he pumped viciously, going all the way in.

I saw his teeth elongate and his claws grow out, meaning he was enjoying himself. Knight was trying to take over, and I wanted him to.

He pumped and fought a claim. I shattered all over him, feeling liquid sip out of me. Sylvester finally came and lay by my side. I could see that he was relieved, and I was satiated.

“So you want to play detective?” he said. After we had laid down for forty minutes, I nodded.

“I, too, believe we will find something out in Jenny’s place. Hence why I sealed and guarded her house after her death,” he confessed, and I squealed at him.

“But I can’t let you go there with the ladies,” He said, and I frowned at him. He sat up and sighed.

“You are my life, Tamia. I have never been this much in love in my entire existence, and people know. They know you are my weakness. They know how much I love you because I do not hide it. I can’t, even if I want to,” he said and bowed.

“After what happened with Dominic, I realised people are out to get me and hurt me. They can only hurt me by hurting you and our baby. We will be parents soon, Tamia. I want you protected at all costs. I know you will do an excellent job, tell my men what to look for, and they will bring it, but I can’t let my wife out of my sight,” He said and bent to kiss my lower belly.

“I have wanted this all my life. A mate that genuinely loves my family and me. Now that I have you, I can’t be careless, Tamia. Please. Do not push it. These people are dangerous. They took Bryce’s

pregnant mate. I am not saying you are weak or can’t defend yourself, but they are cunning and unknown. There is nothing more difficult than fighting the unknown,” he said and touched my hand.

“Please, my love, do not argue with me on this one,” he pleaded and kissed my hand.

“I want you to instruct my men, and they will do as you have requested. Share your thoughts with Theodore and Marcel, but I won’t let you play detective. If you are bored, think of something to do for the All-regional games that does not involve you participating in the sports activities,” He said. I knew he needed me to say yes. He was genuinely afraid, and I could see it. So I nodded.

“Basically, what I need are journals, notes however insignificant. If I can’t go, at least let Theodore or Marcel lead the search. Finding these items isn’t the only important thing. How and where they are found matters. It can say a lot and give us more information than the items themselves,” I said, and he sighed.

“Very well, we will all go there. I will not let you out of my sight, Tamia. I won’t.” he said, and laid back down and pulled me close. He sucked on my sweet spot gently.

“I won’t survive if I lose you. If anything ever happens to you, my darling, I will become the Dark Alpha,” he said, and as much as it sounded like a joke, I knew he was serious.

We both fell asleep, and I woke up in the night.

It was nine at night, so I decided to walk to Avery’s wing to check on her. She had been depressed lately, and I knew it was because of my pregnancy.

I knew she feared something was wrong with her, just like I was. I was sure she was alright and would happen soon, but I needed to ensure she was okay.

I left my room barefooted so I don't wake Sylvester. He was sleeping peacefully, and he needed the rest.

While I walked down the halls barefooted, causing me to have stealth, I heard someone whispering on the phone. I did not like eavesdropping, but these were dangerous times, so I leaned closer to listen.

"It is too tight right now; I can't get it for you. You will have to wait and let things loosen up a bit. Maybe during the games," A voice that sounded like Lily said. Then I heard her hang up and approach, so I hid behind a door. She walked out of the corner she was hiding and looked about to be sure the coast was clear before leaving.

I knew women from the harem were not allowed phones, and Sylvester never told me she had special privileges. Whatever she was doing, she was up to no good, and I wondered what she was asked to procure that would need to be done during the games when the security wasn't so tight anymore. I planned on telling Sylvester and having the woman investigated. She was scornful and might try to hurt us for it.

I walked and bumped into Stephanie, the last person I wanted to see.

~Tamia~

Stephanie did not look well. Her eyes were swollen, and her hands were shaking. It was clear that she had been crying.

I wanted to ignore her, but I couldn't. I knew Sylvester wouldn't, so I decided to show some concern.

"Are you alright?" I asked, and she looked at me and shook her head.

"I am not, Tamia. Everything is falling apart. Dominic won't come out of his room. He said he feels like a nobody. I have tried to talk him out of it, but he is too ashamed to let himself mingle," She said, and I nodded.

"You need to give him time, Stephanie. He had a near-death experience. If Bryce had not confessed, he might have been dead by now. He will need time to recover from it," I said, and she hugged me and began to cry.

I did not know what to tell her. So I hugged her in return and patted her back.

“You need to take it easy, Stephanie. Crying won’t fix him. You need to find the things and people that make him happy and try to surround him with them,” I said, and she sighed and bowed.

She looked at me and studied me.

“You will be the Lady of the north soon, Tamia; there are things I need to tell you. Things that I swore to take to my grave but I suspect are part of why all these are happening to my sons,” She said, and I was surprised that she was willing to trust me with her secret.

“Are you sure you want to tell me?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“You will be Luna soon and rule by his side. You’re already doing it, and unlike me, your Alpha loves you and gives you freedom. You take part in council discussions and give advice. None of which I was allowed in my time. You give northern women hope, Tamia.” She said and sighed.

“There are things I need to tell for the sake of the Volkov bloodline. You need to know that you have a Volkov growing inside you. You need to know the truth about Maurice and our children..” She said, and my mind went to what Jake had told me.

Was she planning on telling me the truth, or was she planning on deceiving me like she might have deceived her children?

“Does it have anything to do with what is going on?” I asked, and she paused, looking at me. She was contemplating what to tell me. She was sizing me up, and I wasn’t angry at all.

“It might,” she confessed, and I looked at her.

“I will join you in your room in a few minutes. I want to check on Avery. The hallway isn’t as safe as we think; we might have spies lurking about the place,” I linked her, and she nodded at me.

I still could not shake off Lily’s phone conversation. I could not shake off the fact that I knew she wasn’t supposed to have a phone. I couldn’t shake it off. Something was off, and I planned on figuring it out.

Stephanie walked past me, heading to her room while I headed towards the Beta's wing to see Avery. I would have checked on Linda too, but I knew she and Marcel went on a date.

I got to Avery's door and knocked.

"It's open," I heard Avery say, and I gently let myself in. I saw my friend sitting on a couch and working on an embroidery piece. I looked at the leaf design she was weaving into the fabric and realised that her skill had improved, but she was still marring the fabric.

"Tamia, you and Sylvester missed dinner," She said, and I nodded and sat beside her.

"How are you feeling?" I asked, and she sighed.

"I feel nervous," She said, and I wondered why.

"Why?" I asked, and she sighed and put down her supposed artwork, which was more of a cluster and an honest attempt at being creative.

"I have wanted babies for as long, but when Michelle came into our lives, it became a tall dream. Now I found love again. Marcel and I started trying before you and Sylvester got together. Then Linda and Theodore got together," She said and bowed her head and began to weep.

"Yet I am still waiting in line, Tamia. I waited in line with Max, and I believe that was why Michelle got the best of him, and now here I am with Marcel," she said, and I moved close to her and rubbed her back.

"Do not be afraid, Avery; it will happen for you, too," I said, rubbing her back.

"But when?" She asked, and I sighed.

"You should see a doctor to know if anything is wrong and if it can be corrected. That is what I would do," I said, and she broke the hug and stared at me.

"You are right, Tamia," She said and held my hand.

"Join me at the hospital tomorrow, please," She said, and I remembered my conversation with Sylvester about protection and not being on my own.

“I suggest you go with Marcel. It would be best if you handled it together,” I said, and she shook her head.

“I want you to come with me, Tamia. I do not want Marcel. What if something is wrong with me? He will know and might change his mind. I love him, Tamia; I can’t lose him,” She said with genuine fear in her eyes.

“Nothing is the matter with you, Avery. I will speak to Sylvester to let me follow you to the hospital,” I said to ease her mind, and she thanked me.

I tried to counsel her to the best of my ability and decided to leave because I did not want to keep Stephanie waiting.

My actions might have seemed a bit stupid. Whatever Stephanie wanted to tell me must have been serious, so it was wrong to put her on hold, but I knew that whatever she was going to tell me might leave me shellshocked, and I won’t be able to check on my friend, so I wanted to get it out of the way before speaking to Stephanie.

I walked still barefooted so people could not hear my footsteps. I took a mental note to do this often. Lily was on my watch list. I needed to know who gave her a phone and who she was communicating with.

I got to Stephanie’s door and knocked.

“Please come in, Tamia; I know it is you,” She said, and I let myself in.

“Lock the door,” She said, and I did as she said and approached her where she sat on the couch in her room.

I went to sit with her, and she smiled at me. I was still wary of her, but I let it be because she was open to me again. There were only two possibilities: to misguide or tell the truth, so I was attentive.

“I am sorry to ask you this question, but I need you to be honest. How did it feel when Leo met his fated?” She asked, and I looked at her. I contemplated answering it, but I knew I had to, or the conversation won’t make headway.

“Heartwrenching. My life was over. He was the lead alpha of the East; I had nowhere to go, and no one would want me. I could not leave, so I was there

through it all until the north attacked and gave me a chance to escape,” I said, and she looked at me stunned.

“Yes, I gave myself as a tribute to leave Leo. We would have subdued the people who attacked us, but I did not want to be the third wheel in their home anymore. They were going to be a family. There was no place for me,” I said, and she looked at me worried, but I smiled at her.

“I am glad,” I said and placed my hand on my belly. “I found love in the north and everything I ever wanted.” I told her, and she smiled.

“Do you know if Leo were Sylvester, then truly you would have nowhere to go? Sylvester is a step up from Leo, but no one is a step up from the Wolf lord. So, in that case, you will be stranded forever, and even if you want to leave him, it would be impossible. Society won’t allow it, your family won’t allow it, and your heart and wolf will hold on so tight, and it won’t allow it. There is something in us that seeks the dominant male,” She said, and I wondered why she was saying such things.

“I didn’t call you here to discuss your relationship.” She said and sighed. I called you here to discuss mine.

“Something my sons did not know was that their father had a fated,” she said, and I exclaimed, pretending not to know so she could give me her version of the story.

“Everyone that knew was sworn to secrecy by Maurice. Her name was Alissa Pavlishchev, and she was from Gad in the western region. Only the people in the council and older western Alphas knew of her.” She said.

“Maurice loved me wholeheartedly until he met her. He never slept with anyone. Like Sylvester is with you, my husband was that way with me. Maybe not exactly, but you get the picture,” she said, and her eyes welled up in tears.

“I loved Maurice with all my heart, and I thought our lives would be rosy, but I was wrong. He met Alissa and took her as his mistress. My family and the council did not let him claim her because that would insult me, so he slept with her and made me endure unimaginable pain. The woman wasn’t a saint, either. They never are. It is not by choice but by design. No fated would want to be a mistress. They see us as taking their space, so they would do anything to replace us fully and not share their mate.

She plotted against me and manipulated my husband.

She was the one that made him start the war frenzy. When my family and part of the council pushed back, Maurice moved to eliminate them to make her Lady and his Luna; I had given up hope. I had Dominic then, and he wasn't an Alpha, so I knew my days with Maurice were numbered. When she got pregnant, I left the estate and returned home with Dominic. Maurice did not look for me. He doted on her and loved her, but he never claimed her. The woman was so wicked that her people refused to come and work in the estate to help her. If you think I am lying, you can investigate. Because of this, Maurice forced me to return and be her midwife. I was maltreated and abused. He would beat me because of her and her lies, and she never ran out of lies. I was tired. If it was a lesser Alpha, I could run, but who would challenge the wolf lord for my sake? I knew I wouldn't be able to leave until he let me go.

The goddess took pity on me and she died giving birth to her son. Maurice lost his mind. First, he said I poisoned her and had me locked up in a cell, but it was proven that she died of a dangerous case of preeclampsia. I was released and asked to care for the child, but I refused. I told Maurice I would not touch his bastard because that was what the boy was. Maurice felt guilty for locking me up, so he did not try to force me to care for the child. Soon he found out all the lies she told about me. When the boy turned one, Maurice found out he had an Alpha wolf, so he sent him to Grizlo in the north to be cared

for by a small family. Around that time, I was pregnant with Sylvester, but things weren't the same. Although Maurice loved me, the loss of his mate destroyed him, and he found himself drawn to women of the west who looked like her, so he started actively keeping a harem. He conquered the entire west for other reasons but took their women so he could replace Alissa briefly. I handled it well, had Sylvester, and when Maurice found that Sylvester was an Alpha, his love for me increased, and Alissa and her son faded away." She said and looked at me.

"That boy's name is David Pavlishchev. Maurice did not give him his last name because he was a bastard." She concluded, and I was in shock.

"That bastard was why I left here, Tamia. I went to see if I could find out about his whereabouts because he was the only one that would want to kill my sons. He is the only one who will have something to gain from this. Dominic and Sylvester do not know of his existence. I told Dominic yesterday, he didn't

take it well. That is why I am telling you this so you can help me tell Sylvester. We need to find David and be sure he isn't behind all this. I do not have proof; I am just speculating, but I know you are good with investigations. I will need you to carry one out for me and figure it out," She said, but I was too dumbfounded to respond.

~Tamia~

Shock could not describe how I felt after Stephanie had told me everything.

I sat on the couch and stared at her, speechless.

"Why are you trusting me with this level of information, Luna Stephanie?" I asked her, and she wiped away her tears.

Going down memory lane was hard for her, and I could see she loved her husband dearly, just like I loved Leo, and I wouldn't have let him go.

To be fair to her, I could understand her predicament, which was why I had to let Devin go when he came to me.

I couldn't be selfish and crush the one person that dared to love me through my pain.

My heart truly belonged to Sylvester. I was lucky.

Stephanie did not have a Sylvester that would sweep her off her feet and rescue her, so she had to deal, but hearing her open up to me like this made me afraid.

I wasn't her best person; in fact, there was friction between us, and I doubted it would change. For her to tell me this meant she was desperate.

I tried to remain calm while I waited for her to respond.

"I think he is behind this, Tamia," she said and bowed.

"He might feel cheated. He is an Alpha, and he is older than Sylvester. If he weren't a bastard, he would have been the lord of the north. I am sure he knows I am the reason Maurice could not marry his

mother properly,” she said, and I wondered if she was speaking from knowledge and not just a hunch. There was no way she wouldn’t know what was going on in this David’s mind if she wasn’t privy to it.

I looked at her for a bit.

“Are you sure about these things?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“I can’t lie about this,” She responded, and I wanted to beg to differ, but I held my tongue.

“You know if I tell Sylvester about this man, he will hunt him down, and there will be no going back from this,” I said and sighed.

“Are you sure he is a threat to my mate?” I asked her, letting her know Sylvester was my first concern, and she nodded. I smiled because I had her right where I wanted her.

“In that case, I need you to come clean about it. Tell me how you are so sure this man is a threat?” I asked her, and she looked at me and nodded her head.

“I do not know how to explain it, Tamia, but I just have a hunch. At least let us find him, and then we will know what to do from there,” She explained, and I understood what she wanted from me.

Stephanie wasn’t sure of her hunch, and she knew Sylvester would not have a subtle approach, and his approach could aggravate this David. She wanted me to tell Sylvester about David and make sure he is subtle about it.

“Very well then..” I said, and just then, I heard Sylvester’s voice in my head.

“Where are you?” He said, and I knew he had woken up and wondered where I had gone.

I got off the couch and looked at my barefoot.

“On my way back to you, darling,” I linked with him, and he was quiet.

“I have to go back,” I told Stephanie, and she nodded and looked at me.

"I am truly happy for both of you. I know it may not seem so, but I am. I am also begging you not to break his heart, Tamia. Susan left my baby wounded, which is why I have been uptight. Please." She said and looked at my tummy.

"I am sure you two will make a great family," She said, and I smiled at her.

"I cannot hurt him, Stephanie, and he knows it. I love him with everything I am, and I have turned my back on everything just to be with him. My love and heart are in his hands. I hope he does not break me," I said, and she could not speak.

I did not owe her the explanation that I had rejected my fated for his sake. That was to remain between Sylvester and me, but she needed to know that I was in my relationship a hundred per cent, and I did not plan on ever letting my man go.

I hugged her and assured her everything would be alright before leaving her room and heading towards mine. I bumped into Lilly on my way, and she looked at my foot.

One thing I noticed was she was lurking around our corridors too much. I know Sylvester was easy on her, but this wasn't her wing.

"Good Evening, Luna," She said to me, already according me the respect of Luna.

"Hello, Lilly," I said, and she looked at my barefoot.

"Is that because you are pregnant?" She asked me with a tinge of jealousy, and I smiled.

"No, dear, it is so I can sneak around the place unnoticed," I said and walked away from her.

I felt her eyes on me, and I turned to wink at her.

I wanted her relaxed and a little bit on edge simultaneously. She was bound to make mistakes faster when on edge than when relaxed.

"I entered the room and went to bed. Sylvester wrapped his arm around me and kissed my neck.

"The bed was cold," he said, and I turned to look at him.

“Since when did a cold bed start troubling you?” I asked, wanting to laugh.

“When you started sleeping in it, Tamia,” He said in his low deep voice, and it made me shiver in a good way. Sylvester knew how to turn me on, and this was one of those.

He came on top, and I knew the night would be longer than expected.

We had breakfast in the morning with our friends, and Sylvester brought up the investigation.

“I will want us to go through the things in late Jenny’s house,”

Sylvester said, and Marcel looked at him.

“Have you told the Lawrences about it? Especially Vino. She might be occupying a Babanin seat, but she is still his aunt.” Marcel said, and I was a bit surprised that Jenny was Vino’s aunt, but the name was a dead giveaway. She was Jenny Lawrence; I just thought she was a different Lawrence. In light of this, things were a bit confusing in my head.

“I do not need permission, especially when I am trying to figure out why she was killed,” Sylvester said, and Marcel nodded.

“Sign me up,” Linda said immediately, and Theodore looked a bit pissed at her.

I understood why she committed herself quickly because she knew he would try to stop her because of the pregnancy.

“Are you sure it is the best way to go?” Marcel asked Sylvester, and he nodded.

“I knew my mother wasn’t the target of that attack. Jenny might have been involved in something or known something to be eliminated.” Sylvester said, and Marcel sighed.

“What about the wire transfers that Lily was working on? Does it show any funds leading to or from Jenny? We have to check everything knowing that your father almost wiped them out.” Marcel asked.

“They should lead somewhere,” Marcel added, and I remembered her phone call and contemplated bringing it up.

“All those anonymous transfers lead to the south, and now some are going east. I have asked Lily to take a break. I cannot leave her with a computer unattended, and I want to spend time with Tamia. So I will find another way to trace the transfers,” Sylvester said and touched my hand. He kissed it, making my body shake.

“I am worried that some people are stationing people in the east and west. With what has happened recently, I hope an attack that would be blamed on the north will not ensue. We are yet to understand why the transfers and the people they are going to are anonymous. I can't shake off the fact that everything is directed at destroying my family. The fact that my father had many enemies does not help matters either. I am thinking of reaching out to the distant Volkovs for help,” He confessed, and I touched his hand.

“Very well, what time do we go to Jenny's house, and how many of us are going?” Theodore asked. Sylvester smiled and kissed my hand again.

“See it more like a date because we are bringing our mates with us,” he said, and Marcel shook his head.

“Avery and I have a doctor's appointment this morning,” He said, and Sylvester shrugged.

“Go and return. Pending on what the doctor says will determine whether or not Avery will be coming,” He said, and Marcel nodded and thanked him.

After the serious discussion, we returned to our food, and Sylvester could not keep his hands off my body. He got me all worked up that I might have gone on top of him in that room.

He breathed in my scent and ensured his pinewood scent surrounded me. He nibbled my ears and sucked on my sweet spot.

“My mark will be there soon, darling. You will be truly mine,” He linked me, and a faint moan escaped my lips. The room was a bit blurry, and he was getting me worked up.

“I am already yours,” I linked him back, and I felt his tongue brush through, making my body shiver and the hairs on my skin stand because of the goosebumps his action produced.

“Sylvester..” I moaned, and he placed a grape in my mouth, allowing his finger to enter my mouth. I sucked on it to let him know the work I could do to his cock. He felt it because Knight growled, and Kaira purred in my head.

“You two should get a room,” I heard someone say, but I was too far gone to know who did. It was between Linda and Avery.

We finished breakfast, and Sylvester and I returned to our bedroom.

I was wet and horny, but at the same time, I needed to tell him about Lily.

We entered the room, and he rushed at me, ready to take me. As much as I wasn't selfish, he had ignited a fire that needed attention, so I let him go to work on my body.

It was a passion-filled morning, and I confessed to all sorts of things.

He made me say something that I wouldn't have on a typical day while hitting the right spot; with his intoxicating scent and the love I felt in my heart, I could promise him the moon, which wasn't mine to give by the way, but I could hypothetically give it to him because he had taken me there and back and he knew it.

We lay on the bed tired, with my head against his chest. I kissed his chest, and he touched my back gently.

I thought of the few times I heard of him while I was in the east.

If anyone told me he would be the love of my life back then, I wouldn't believe them, but the funny part was there was no day that I judged or resented him. It helped me decide to come to the north, and I was glad I did.

“I need to talk to you about something,” I said, and he made both of us sit so he could look into my eyes. He looked worried, so I smiled at him to be calm.

“Are the women in the Harem allowed to have cell phones?” I asked him, and he froze.

“I can't let them have cell phones, Tamia; that will defeat the purpose of keeping them in check. They can also betray the north and easily sell information that way,” he said, placing his hand on my cheek. He thought I wanted him to give them cell phones. It was cute.

“I know you are a kind woman, but please do not ask me to give them a phone. Please do not ask me to endanger the north.” He said, and I shook my head and kissed his hand on my cheek by turning towards it. I used my hand to gently hold his palm against my face and closed my eyes to relish the feeling.

“I need you to act rational and wisely about what I am about to tell you. Promise me you won’t lose your shit,” I said, and he looked confused.

“Last night, I decided to check on Avery in her wing, so I left barefoot, knowing my attempt to wear something on my feet would wake you up. While I walked down the hallways, I heard a voice. I hid behind the door to listen; it was Lily talking on a phone. She told someone that things were a bit tight and she couldn’t get something for the person and that the person should wait until during the all-region game when security is loose,” I said, and I saw rage rise in his eyes. Sylvester looked like he was about to kill someone, and I hoped it was nothing for Lily’s sake.

~Sylvester~

I could not believe what Tamia had just told me about Lily.

I was so mad that I knew Knight could emerge.

I looked at my mate, and she did not seem like she was joking.

From the look in her green eyes, it took a lot of effort for her to tell me what she had just divulged.

I raised my hand, patted her head gently, and then kissed her lips. It was more to calm myself down than to tell her I was okay.

I knew I needed to be calm to handle the matter.

Lily was a big problem. If she was betraying me, then I was in trouble because she knew of my investigations, and she was helping me with one of them.

What if she was giving out the information to someone else?

I had always suspected I couldn’t trust her, but when she came, she was innocent-looking, and I thought I could have the younger sister I never had.

I revoked her privileges when I heard all the awful things she did to the women in the harem.

I did not want to jump to conclusions, but I wanted to get up and go and find out the truth.

I was about to get up when Tamia stopped me with her hand.

“I have not finished talking to you, darling. Please be calm. I hope there is a rational explanation for what I heard and saw,” She said, and I searched her eyes, my soul pleading, hoping that whatever she

needed to tell me next would be easy to digest.

“Here goes,” She said and sighed.

“After the incident with Lily, I bumped into your mother.” She said, and I held my tongue. I did not want to say anything that would change the topic.

” She was crying, and she requested to speak to me immediately. Of course, I went to see Avery and then returned to your mother’s room.” She said and squeezed my arm.

“Your mother explained why she left the estate in a hurry that day Dominic was arrested, and what she went to do,” she said.

“According to her, your father had a fated called Lady Alissa Pavlishchev,” She continued, and I exclaimed. Tamia just nodded gradually and continued what she was saying.

“Your father accepted his fated and made your mother share. She did not have you then, and when the woman was pregnant, your mother left with Dominic. Things happened, and your mother was asked to return to care for her. All the while, he tried to divorce your mother, but her family was too important for him to divorce her successfully, so he started conquering the council families and the west. He wanted to own the world and be powerful enough to overthrow the council and marry this woman. According to your mother, the woman was evil and did many mean things. Eventually, she died giving birth to her son. This was relieving to your mother, but that was the beginning of your father growing his harem and getting involved with the women in the harem. He only went for women of western descent because they reminded him of his fated. Your father realised the boy was an Alpha, so

he tried to get your mother to take care of the baby, but she said no, so he sent the boy to be cared for. She got pregnant with you, and everything became rosy after she gave birth to you, and he discovered you were an Alpha too.” She said and searched my eyes for emotions, but I made sure there was nothing in them so she would have the confidence to tell me the rest.

“When your mother left, it wasn’t an act of defiance, but to find David Pavlishchev, your half-brother, because she believed he might be the culprit. He has so much to gain if anything happens to either of you,” she said, and I knew she was right.

“Did my mother tell you his last known location?” I asked, and she shook her head.

“Very well, I will handle it,” I said, and she smiled.

She laid down a bit, and I held her in bed until she fell asleep.

It was time to go to the only part of the mansion I never visit. The Harem. I linked Theodore to meet me there with two women from my staff.

I kept my anger under control and moved swiftly.

When I got to the common hall of the harem, the entire place was silent. I had never visited there since the women had been brought. The last I was there was when we were actively involved with the former women in the harem before I let all of them go.

Marcel, Theodore and I threw orgies there and partied all night long. Thinking of the life I led back then; I was ashamed of myself and grateful that Tamia brought meaning and love back into my life because Susan left with everything, and I was nothing but an empty shell.

Most of the ladies were looking at me seductively, and I ignored them. My eyes searched and found Lily, who smiled at me.

I motioned her to come to me, and she approached eagerly.

“Take me to your bedroom,” I said, and I heard some women gasp. I knew what they were thinking, but I did not owe anyone any explanation.

We waited for Theodore to join us before leaving. I could see the giddiness in Lily's eyes, and I remained silent.

"I hope Luna Tamia won't be mad about this Alpha. I do not want to anger luna," She said with a sly tone, and I wanted to hit her, but I controlled myself. If what Tamia said checked out, she would have betrayed me beyond repair. I was holding my temper.

"What is going on?" Theodore linked me.

"Be attentive," was all I could manage, and he was silent.

We got to Lily's room which she shared with two other girls, and I entered.

The room was beautifully furnished, and three beds were placed in it. Beside each bed was a vanity table. It looked like a luxurious hostel, which was the point, and Lilly stood with her head bowed.

I knew what she was thinking, and she began to undo her tunic to confirm my suspicion. I could feel her joy and expectation. I had never given her the sign that I wanted anything sensual with her, but I knew it was a fantasy in her head, and it almost cost me my relationship with Tamia.

"Keep your clothes on," I ordered quietly. She looked confused but nodded.

"I am at your service, Alpha," She said with her head bowed.

"Where is your bed?" I asked, and she eagerly pointed to the bed close to the wall. I linked the women that came with us to search through her things.

Lily became apprehensive immediately.

"What is going on, Alpha?" She said, looking worried.

"Hold her, Theodore," I told my Gamma, and he did as I had said.

"Where is the phone, Lily?" I asked her and her eyes widened.

"Do not bother lying because people told me you have one. Where did you put it?" I asked her, and she bowed her head and began to sob.

“Where is it!” I yelled, feeling my anger bubbling to the surface at the realisation that there was indeed a phone and Tamia was right.

“Inside the mattress under my bed,” She confessed. The women lifted her mattress, and there the phone was.

They brought it to me, and it had no number and no messages, but the call log had an anonymous caller on it. The person was wise to hide their caller identity when calling.

“How did you get this?” I asked her calmly, and she sobbed. I tried to hold my temper because I knew I could kill her.

“What have you given them?” I asked her, and she continued to cry.

“Answer me!” I yelled with my authority, and she shook.

She struggled and broke away from Theodore and went on her knees.

“I am sorry, Alpha. I am sorry. They promised I would go home but threatened they would wipe my family out if I did not comply,” she said without answering my question.

“Do not test my patience, Lily. What did you give them, and who were you speaking to?” I asked her, and she began to sob.

“They did not give me a name. Sometimes it was a woman and sometimes a man,” She said, and I grabbed her neck and squeezed.

“What did you give them?” I asked, angry.

“Sylvester?” I heard Tamia’s voice in my head, and I cursed under my breath because I wasn’t expecting her to be awake.

“Sylvester?” I heard her voice again, and I released Lilly’s neck.

“Yes, darling, I am in Lily’s room; you are right,” I said, and she did not reply. I knew she was on her way.

“What did you give them?”

“Banking details, signatures, royal seals, envelopes, and I placed a backdoor on your computer to help them monitor what you were doing,” She said quickly, and I slapped her.

She fell to the ground. I was enraged.

Chapter 55 - The Destiny of a Heart-broken Luna

~Tamia~

“That went well,” Kaira said, purring in my head as Sylvester walked to the bathroom naked.

I stared at his chiselled body, and it made me groan. How could someone be carved so perfectly? Tight butt cheeks, define calves. His muscles flexed, and his tattoo was masterfully done.

“How did we end up with such a hottie?” Kaira said, and I had to shut my horny wolf up because Leo was hot too but not this hot.

Kaira was a complete contrast from a few hours ago when she was panicking about our make-out session with Devin.

I wondered how Devin was doing and if he had indeed moved on. I hoped so because the last thing I wanted was for him to feel cheated.

“Come over,” I heard Sylvester in my head, and I left the bed naked and went into the bathroom. He laid in the tub with water and asked me to sit between his legs so he could wash me.

I got in with him, and he kissed my shoulder, which made me moan. He lathered the sponge and began to wash my skin. I knew I was being pampered, so I relished the moment. Taking everything in and letting him spoil me.

Morning came, and we had our breakfast together.

Everyone congratulated me, and I noticed Avery was a bit affected by it. She was happy for me, but she was sad for herself.

I touched her hand lightly to encourage her, and she knew that I knew.

Soon we left the place and got ready to go to the council hall.

Stephanie approached us on our way out, and I was a bit uncomfortable.

I did not know what to tell her, but I chose to be civil for Sylvester's sake.

"Good morning, dear Tamia," she said, and I smiled at her in response.

"Congratulations. Thanks to you I will soon be a grandma," She said, looking genuinely happy, and I smiled at her, not wanting to say anything.

She touched my hand and patted it lightly.

"We should talk when you return," she said gently with pleading eyes. I did not want to be alone in a room with her, but I knew Sylvester won't see anything wrong with it, so I nodded.

"As long as the conversation does not include my doom and slurs, I will make room," I said, and Sylvester chuckled.

She pulled me into a hug.

"I am sorry for all the hurtful things I said to you," She said. Because she didn't strike me as the type to eat her words, I was wary of her apology, but I accepted it for Sylvester's sake. I did not want him to feel torn between his mother and me, but I had questions for her and hoped she would be truthful enough to answer them.

We walked away, and a vehicle was waiting for us.

Usually, Sylvester used his jeep; I wondered why he opted to have a driver drive us in a car. We got into the backseat, and he held me.

"A car?" I said, and he nodded.

"No one drives my jeep, and I want to hold you all through," He said and kissed my neck.

"I still can't believe you rejected your fated for me. You have proven to me that true love exists," he said, and I looked at him and searched his eyes. The driver started the vehicle and moved.

“I was scared you would be mad,” I confessed, and he shook his head.

“I wasn’t growling from anger, green eyes; I was growling from fear. Ever since the attack on the northern gates, I have feared that Devin would take you from me. What you told me has now put my mind at peace,” He said and touched my belly lightly.

“I want to claim you so badly, and I doubt I can wait until the blue moon. If I did not need the blue moon for it to work, I would have done it last night. I want us to be connected on all levels, Tamia; I want you inside me. I want you to share my soul, and I share yours,” he said, and we kissed.

We finally arrived at the council hall and went to sit in Sylvester’s box. Everyone was there, Avery, Marcel, Theodore and Linda. On the floor at the centre was a broken version of Dominic, a very afraid Bryce and a furious version of Larry.

I knew Larry shouldn’t be there, but Sylvester wanted to humiliate the man and make him suffer.

He was justified to do so because the man tried to use Dominic to work against him.

The sooner Dominic realises the enemy is from without, the better.

Vino greeted Sylvester and acknowledged our presence, then handed over to Jacob Mikhailov, the council spokesman.

“I speak on behalf of the council when I say you have overstepped your bounds, my lord,” The man said, and Sylvester was silent.

“Civil and criminal matters are overseen by the council. You have abused your power by holding the prisoners in your custody and choosing to preside over this case. We hereby ask you to withdraw and only observe as we deal with the matters.” He said, and Sylvester raised his hand and signalled the man to be seated.

“Tell me of the council’s investigations and findings first before I respond to your demand,” He said calmly.

Pamela, who I had slowly started to hate, stood up to speak.

“What more is there to know? Enforcer Golubev has confessed the truth. We are here for sentencing,” she said, and I could feel Sylvester’s rage.

“If it was possible to unseat this council, I will. This council has failed woefully in their duty. Was it not this council that accused me of being wicked without investigating the allegation against me? And now you have done the same. Unfortunately, I will decide on this one because my brother is involved. I have done some investigations, and here are my findings. Enforcer Golubev has confessed that he was blackmailed into framing Dominic Volkov. We are in possession of the letter he received from the culprit instructing him to go to the East and cause trouble, and name Dominic as the culprit. In exchange, his pregnant mate will be returned safe and sound.” he said, and people exclaimed.

“We have the letter,” I said, “and I have made copies for you to see.”

“May we see it?” Council Woman Joan Clayman said, and Sylvester nodded.

“What use is this council when it fails to do the needful? I think that there are people actively working against my family and me. And because of this, I will be presiding over every decision until further notice.” He said, and they began to murmur.

“That is wrong; our family fought for this together. You might be a Royal, but we all share in this...” Pamela said, and Sylvester nodded.

“That is why I have not ordered the arrest of every council member. I hope you all have no hand in this because it is disturbing that you do not investigate and are quick to condemn and destroy what is mine. My brother would have been sentenced and executed for nothing. I want this council to focus on finding the culprit behind this. My Luna and I know that Jenny was the target of the attack that took her life, not my mother; I want this council to spend their precious time figuring out why. I want this council to reduce my workload for me. If I have to get involved with the investigations, I will water down the council’s power. According to the law, I can do it,” he said, and they were all quiet. I noticed some of them look at me scornfully.

“With all due respect, your Eminence, Lunas are not allowed in the council hall, and they are not allowed to preside over matters. Their duty is to make sure the Volkov bloodline always has an heir. You are not married to this woman yet; it will be advisable to keep her out of our business for now,” Joan

said, and I knew what they were implying. I always wondered why Stephanie never came; now I know why.

“Well, not in my Epoch,” Sylvester said and stood up.

“How many of you can boast of having Tamia Riverstorm Albert’s achievements added to their belts? She is a strategist, an analyst, a warrior and one of the best investigators in our world. If that does not qualify her to sit in this box, observe, interfere and decide over matters, then I don’t know what would,” he said and sat down.

“I will not repeat myself. Let this be the last time any of you will speak of my Luna as if she is an outsider and an object. I will take it as an insult to my person, and I will not take it easy regardless of your family.” He said and sighed.

I looked at them, and they were silent. Some of them looked at me scornfully, except for Vino, who was smiling at me. I returned his smile, and he nodded.

They read the photocopied letter that Sylvester had passed to them, and they were silent. Then Pamela moved to question Bryce, and he was honest. She asked him if anyone was coerced.

“Are you sure you speak the truth, Enforcer?” She asked him, and Bryce kept his head down.

“I feared they would kill my wife and our unborn child. The instructions were clear. I was to get to the Volkov estate so it would seem like I had a meeting with Lord Dominic. I was to go to the East and state that the council sent me under Lord Volkov’s orders to collect development tax. I was asked to be rude and threaten the head Alpha of the East, and when I was asked who sent me, I was to tell this council it was lord Dominic Volkov. That is the truth,” The man said, and Pamela nodded.

“So, what made you tell the truth?” She asked him.

“My Lord and Lady interrogated me in the council prison and figured out I was lying. I had to give up the pretence and tell the truth,” he confessed, and Pamela shook her head.

“Are you sure you were not coerced by Lady Tamia?” She asked, and I would have slapped her if I had been close to her. Suddenly I began to feel the woman loathed me. I wondered what I did to these people.

She was now high on my investigation list. She better be clean, or I would disgrace her and make sure she loses her seat. I will make an example of the bitch. I was pissed off.

I felt Sylvester’s hand on my thighs, and he touched it gently and smiled at me.

“Calm down, green eyes,” he pleaded with me, and I nodded.

“I wasn’t threatened or coerced by my Lady.” Enforcer Bryce said, and the woman kept quiet. I thought she would dare to ask if Sylvester coerced him, but she didn’t. The bitch.

“Very well then, I doubt there is any need for a trail,” Vino said, and people were silent.

“I hereby acquit Dominic Volkov of all the allegations made against him. I also acquit Councilman Larry McMillian Babanins of the suspicion of conniving with Dominic to commit treason.” Vino said, and I remembered the Babanins as one of the families that Maurice took out, according to Jake Brighton. I kept a mental note of it.

Some enforcers went to release Dominic and Larry from the chains. Dominic walked away with his head bowed, feeling ashamed. Likewise Larry, but I noticed something while they walked; Dominic kept his distance from Larry. Locked up for a few days, death looming over his head made Dominic rethink certain things.

Soon I saw Dominic come to join us in our box. I was uncomfortable, but he was Sylvester’s brother.

“Enforcer Bryce Golubev, you have lied against royalty. You committed an offence that would have cost the man his life. You also misled this council, which is an act of treason. As a result, we sentence you to death by beheading.” Vino pronounced with a tinge of anger, and I squeezed Sylvester’s lap.

“Do not let them kill him. This will not be the end of people plotting against you. The next person will never tell the truth if Bryce loses his life,” I said quickly, and Sylvester stopped the enforcers from taking Bryce away.

“No one is going to die by beheading,” Sylvester said comfortably, and Dominic growled. I could understand Dominic’s anger, but Bryce had no choice.

“He spoke up and told the truth. He could have also maintained his lie, which would have saved him from punishment. But he told the truth and, in turn, saved my brother and councilman Larry from being

sentenced for treason. As a result, I pardon him and move him to work at the Volkov estate. I would rather surround myself with honest people than connivers,” Sylvester said, and the council murmured.

“The law, your Eminence,” Pamela said, and Sylvester shook his head.

“I choose mercy,” he said, and the woman looked at me. Her eyes showed she knew I was the one that instigated it. I needed to find a way to clip her wings before she became a problem for me. As things were, Vino was the only council member who did not hate me.

~Devin~

I decided to attend Jake’s festival to unwind. It was a last-minute decision. I planned to spend four days in Brighton and then return to Greenwood. It was a great plan. It was supposed to ease my stress and help me think straight.

When I arrived in Brighton in the evening of the festival and Jake told me that Tamia was around, I was giddy. Rex was overjoyed, and I could not believe how easy it would be to take my mate away from Sylvester. Hearing that Sylvester sent her to have a peace talk with Jake unaccompanied made me think of two different extremes.

Either they loved and trusted each other so much that he would allow her to handle state matters without fear, or her life meant nothing. He was willing to gamble it away by using her to apologise to Jake, hoping Jake won’t attack and kill her.

Hearing Jake talk about her made me realise she was alright.

He told me she arrived a bit ill and pale looking, and I was afraid Sylvester maltreated her in the north.

I planned it all.

The rose, the garden. I wanted it to be perfect. I wanted it to be romantic. It is all I have ever wanted. Finding my mate and starting a real life in love and happiness.

Tamia was perfect. I did not care that she was once married or was taken by the wolf lord. I did not care. I just wanted my mate.

Rex hoped to hold her, accept her and claim her. I wasn't going to waste any time.

I was going to run fast and sink my teeth into her.

I did not need to wait for the blue moon; that was only done by chosen mates for the claiming to work.

I did not need the blue moon to claim my mate. The moon goddess had given her to me.

So I used my scent to lure her.

She scented Peach and Wildflowers. Her scent was vivid and more precise than when we first met at the party.

She was delicious, and she was mine. I hoped she would follow, and she did.

When she saw me and tears started streaming down her cheeks, I knew it wouldn't be easy.

Everything she said to me in tears broke my heart. Not because she refused to run into my arms, but because what she was saying was true.

I took my moment with her for granted. I wronged her deeply.

I knew she was hurting with Leo, and I should have challenged him for her hand, but I was diplomatic about it. I made the biggest mistake of my life.

I should have taken her from him that night. I took our moment for granted, and Volkov stole her heart.

I could not blame her for rejecting me. But deep down, she should have given me a chance to prove myself.

No pain or weakness came with the rejection, but the feeling was the same.

I knew she battled her wolf to let me go. As much as I wanted to be persistent, I had to respect her wishes. I lost my chance, and I hated myself for it. Rex did not forgive me for accepting the rejection.

We actually thought she would let us claim her. The feeling was right. It felt so good, and I wanted to sink my teeth into her neck, but she pulled away. I could not force myself on her.

I left Brighton the next day a broken man.

Throughout my journey back to Greenwood, my wolf howled, blaming me for the loss and rejection. He, too, was right.

When I held her in my arms at the party, he urged me to throw away the alliance and challenge Leo for her hand. Her eyes were sad and withdrawn. I should've listened to my wolf, but I didn't.

I wanted the marriage to end naturally because they weren't ready to let each other go, even though Amanda had come between them. I know Leo still feels the same way.

I got home and thought I wouldn't long for her anymore, but I still wanted her. I remembered how it felt to have her in my arms, and I wished things were different and she didn't fall in love with Volkov.

"What will we do now?" Rex asked me, still mourning our loss.

"I do not know, but I think we shouldn't be quick to move on. Tamia does not like to share, and knowing the history of the Volkovs, they always have more than one woman. I plan on waiting a bit to see how things go between them." I told my wolf, and he was silent.

I wasn't going to actively try to separate them, but I was afraid she might lose on his side too. There was no way he could be different from his father. I had to make sure I remained available a little longer for her sake.

“I say we wage war and take her from him. The goddess made her for us. She is ours. He has stolen what is ours,” Rex said, and tears streamed down my face.

“She is in love with him, Rex. We can’t beat that. The only thing we can do is wait them out. He might slip up, and if he does, I will be there for her, even if it is as a friend, but this can’t be it,” I said, trying to convince myself there was hope.

My day went slow, and I returned to Greenwood more depressed than I had left.

A day later, I was sitting in my office when Lukman, my beta, brought me an invitation from the Northern Council.

“We hereby invite your pack to partake in our tournament starting next month’s new moon. The open competitions are Polo, Swimming, Football, Golf, Croquet, Volleyball, One Hundred Metre Dash and Ring Fight (without any presence of Silver). Please reply with the list of sports you are interested in and the name of your team members. Thank you, and we look forward to hosting you,” it read, and I looked at the person that sent the invitation.

“From the Northern Council, Signed Joan Clayman. ”

It was strange that the northern council would invite me to participate in the all-region sports games. They usually invite lesser southern Alphas, but they had chosen to invite me this year. I contemplated whether I should accept or not.

“Weirdly, the council would invite us, knowing we have an issue with the lord,” Lukman said. I even had more issues with the Lord because Volkov had stolen the heart of my fated.

“Should we take part in it?” Lukman asked, and I did not know what to say.

Usually, I would say no, but it also meant I would see Tamia one more time before her wedding.

It meant I could officially spend a month in the north without having any hindrances because the tournament takes that long before we complete.

The Polo alone takes two weeks. It would be a great opportunity.

“Do you know if Volkov is participating?” I asked Lukman, and he nodded.

“He plays Polo every year.” He said, and I began to grin from ear to ear.

“Do we have a good Polo team?” I asked him, and he nodded.

“Nikolas Sullivan has a good team. He is a northerner but relocated to the south eleven years ago with his niece. I am sure they would participate in the north as a southern team against Volkov’s team.” He said, and I began to grin because this would be an excellent opportunity to spend time with Tamia.

As much as I hated to think of it, she would be around Sylvester often, and if he played Polo, we would be around each other often.

It will give me a chance.

I need to prove that I am a better man for her. I did not plan on playing dirty, but I planned on making an effort. If I still lose, I would gracefully bow out, but I would try as penance for not taking her away from Leo when I had the chance.

Somehow I knew it was my fault she ended up in the north. If I had taken her from Leo, the north would have still attacked the east, but she wouldn’t be there to give herself up. She would have been with me.

I looked at Lukman, grateful for the opportunity that had dropped on my lap, and I wasn’t going to waste it.

“Ask Nikolas Sullivan to see me in my office. I need to finalise with him and respond to the Northern council as soon as possible before the slots for Polo teams are filled.” I told Lukman, and he went to sort the matter.

I waited nervously in my office, grateful for the opportunity.

Knowing the invitation came in late because most Alphas received their invites two weeks ago, it seemed like a last-minute thing. I believed I wasn’t meant to be invited, but they chose to invite me for reasons known to them.

I felt it was off that the council would invite me, but it might be their step toward making peace with me. After all, Sylvester had sent Tamia to Brighton to make peace with Jake, and he had somehow made peace with Leo.

Leo never spoke scornfully of the Dark Alpha, and I believe he should because the man took his wife, whom he still loves, but Leo seemed to be okay with it. Volkov might have suddenly realised the errors of their ways and wanted to make amends, or this might also be an attempt to keep his enemies close. I did not know what it may be, but I was on alert. If it was a trap, I had to get out of it. If it weren't for my need to see Tamia again and try to prove myself to her, I would have declined.

Nikolas arrived a few hours later, and he had brought his niece. Lukeman had sent a helicopter to pick him up from Pridewood, where they were staying. It wasn't far, but they would have taken longer to get to Greenwood.

The man looked fit and a bit younger than I imagined. He was in his early forties, and I was sure he could swing a mallet with ease. His niece was a pretty blonde woman, roughly twenty-six or twenty-seven. She was very stunning and had that legendary northern beauty.

I stood up to greet them, and they greeted me with a lot of respect. His niece seemed in awe of me and made me feel like a celebrity.

"Please, make yourselves comfortable," I said, offering them seats, and they sat down.

"To what do we owe this honour, alpha?" Nikolas asked, and I smiled so he would know to relax and that I meant well.

"I heard you have the best Polo team in the south," I said, and the man smiled, trying to be modest.

"We try alpha, but it isn't a popular game in the south as it is in the north," he said, and I nodded.

"I know you relocated here with your niece from the north. I was hoping your team could represent us in the all-region tournament starting next new moon," I said, and the man was stunned. He could not contain his joy.

"It will be an honour. I have been looking for an opportunity to showcase my teams. It will be great," The man said, and I looked at his niece, who seemed to be drooling over me, and I smiled at her.

"You play too?" I asked her, and she nodded.

“Yes, she does, but she won’t play at the tournament. She isn’t qualified to play at that level; she will just manage the teams,” The man said, and I had no clue what it entailed, but it sounded like a good thing.

“How many teams would we enter into the competition?” I asked the man.

“Three. We have only three strong teams in the south,” He said, and I nodded.

“Very well then, I will reply and ask them to save three slots for us in the polo tournament. I will need the names of your teams and team members,” I told the man, and he nodded, smiling.

“They will give you a place to rest, and the helicopter will take you back to Pridewood tomorrow,” I said, and the man was excited about it.

I was excited, too, because I had a non-threatening legal reason to be in the north for a whole month. Rex and I were elated, and I relaxed a bit on my couch, hopeful.

~Tamia~

Dominic locked himself in his room for three days after we returned from the council hearing.

I knew it was shame and fear.

Somehow the man did not expect that to happen to him.

I believed realising that he could easily lose his life woke him up.

I wondered how his relationship with Larry would be henceforth.

I knew the council was working against the Volkovs, but we needed to find out who the mastermind was and why, so I decided to start from the beginning.

I went to Sylvester’s office, and he was deep in thought, concentrating on the documents on his desk. Realising some people were actively working against him put him on edge.

Initially, it was based on speculation, but now it was apparent.

Whoever threatened Bryce was either the mastermind or part of the clique.

I looked at him and realised he needed a break.

I had to clear my throat for him to realise I had entered his office. It was either he was far away in his mind or so used to my scent that he did not think I had come in. Either way, he looked up and smiled at me.

“Hey,” he said, and I smiled and looked at him.

“I want to talk to you, but first, let’s go horse riding. I want to go back to the cliff where I can see the alpines,” I said, and he smiled at me, but his eyes looked tired.

“How about we do that tomorrow, darling? I am busy. Besides, it would be best if you weren’t riding in your condition; I will drive the jeep there. Maybe have a picnic?” he asked, and I laughed.

“But I am allowed to ride you...” I said, and his wolf flashed

“I want us to go now; you need a break, Sylvester. It would help if you unwound so you can think straight. Everyone is going crazy. Marcel and Theodore look like you. Dominic has locked himself inside his room, and your mother is confused. We all need a break, and I want to take it now, with you, at the cliff.” I insisted, and he closed the file on his desk and put it away in a silver safe.

It amazes me how comfortable the northerners were around Silver. They trained with it and used it as storage for essential things. It was mid-bugging. The silver was not in the same space as him but was enclosed in an iron cupboard to prevent it from weakening the people in the room.

Sylvester followed me to the room, and I was glad he listened.

We returned to our bedroom to change our outfits.

“What did you want to tell me other than going to the cliff?” He said, and I smiled at him while I changed into something comfortable.

“I think we should send proper investigators to search Jenny’s house and go through her belongings. Avery, Linda and I can lead it. There are specific things that I am looking for that the people we send might miss, and we are bored sitting doing nothing,” I said, and he was silent; then he went to sit on the bed and started unbuttoning his shirt.

The sight of his bare chest might stop us from making it to the cliff because I was already getting turned on by his stripping gesture alone.

“What are you looking for?” he asked.

“Journals, notes, emails, scribbles, objects...things that can tell a story,” I said, and he took off his shirt, flexing his muscles.

He was so hot that I could no longer concentrate on what I was doing.

I wanted to run my fingers against his chest and feel his muscles. He was mine, all mine, and I wanted him.

“Sylvester,” I asked him, drooling over the sight of his body. He looked at me with a question in his eyes.

“What a hot body you have,” I said to him, and he laughed.

We both laughed; just like that, his spirit was lifted, and his mood was lighter.

“The better to seduce you with, my dear,” He said, and we both laughed because I was playing the role of little red, and he was my big bad wolf.

I could not handle my hormones anymore.

We could talk about Jenny after. But the cliff would have to wait for another day. I went to straddle him on the bed and opened my shirt.

“You need to finish the talk, darling. The wolf desires to eat little red riding hood. Unlike her, I am willing to be devoured,” I said, and he gently touched my tits and sucked them gently in his mouth, swirling his tongue on them.

They were sensitive and hard, and I moaned. I wanted more, something was starving in me, and I needed him to satisfy it.

“I will eat you until you beg me to stop,” he said with a low growl and flipped me onto the bed.

He kissed my neck and nibbled my ears, sucking the lobe and breathing into it. I had goosebumps all over, and my pussy was clenching violently.

“Oh, Sylvester. Please,” I pleaded with him.

My body craved him, aching for his touch, tongue, and cock. My core was aching for release.

He worshipped my body with his mouth and travelled down, sucking and licking my skin, leaving a trail of ecstasy, anticipation, need, desire and want. I dug my nails into the sheet, anticipating him.

“Sylvester,” I moaned, and he kissed my lips but avoided my clit. He was teasing me.

“Ahhh,” I moaned from anticipation and lack of patience.

“I need it now,” I said, trying to press my thighs together to ease the ache.

“Tell me what you want, Tamia,” He growled lowly.

“I want you to eat me until I can take no more, then fuck me until I come all over you,” I said, moaning and writhing under him.

I wasn't a shy woman, and now he knew. I could be vocal when I wanted, and I wanted those things and more.

“Now, Sylvester,” I said, my pussy dripping and anticipating his attention and care.

“Prove to me that you are my big bad wolf,” I said, and he growled and dug in.

He licked my knob and travelled down my slit to my pussy.

“Ahhhhhhhh, Sylvester,” I cried.

I was extra sensitive, and he knew it.

“Do not cum until I tell you to,” He ordered, and I nodded, waiting to see how long I could hold out against his skilful tongue. His skill was unparalleled.

“Sylvester,” I cried, wanting to cum so he could bury himself in me. I wanted to feel his skin against mine. I wanted to wrap myself in his scent.

He worked on me until I could no longer take it.

“Please, Alpha...” I moaned, and he growled with satisfaction.

“Cum,” he linked me.

I released and felt the climax ripple through my veins.

My nerves tingled, and my hair was probably standing.

I felt like my spirit was going to jump out on me, and I stretched, then began to crumble from the over- sensitivity of my clit that he refused to let go of.

Sylvester placed his finger in me, kneaded my walls sweetly, then placed himself in and began to pump.

He pounded into me like a beast. Stretching my walls and satisfying my need for him. Everything was heightened, and I was enjoying it.

I dug my nails into his skin and took it all.

Placing my legs over his shoulder and kneeling between my legs, he pumped viciously, going all the way in.

I saw his teeth elongate and his claws grow out, meaning he was enjoying himself. Knight was trying to take over, and I wanted him to.

He pumped and fought a claim. I shattered all over him, feeling liquid sip out of me. Sylvester finally came and lay by my side. I could see that he was relieved, and I was satiated.

“So you want to play detective?” he said. After we had laid down for forty minutes, I nodded.

“I, too, believe we will find something out in Jenny’s place. Hence why I sealed and guarded her house after her death,” he confessed, and I squealed at him.

“But I can’t let you go there with the ladies,” He said, and I frowned at him. He sat up and sighed.

“You are my life, Tamia. I have never been this much in love in my entire existence, and people know. They know you are my weakness. They know how much I love you because I do not hide it. I can’t, even if I want to,” he said and bowed.

“After what happened with Dominic, I realised people are out to get me and hurt me. They can only hurt me by hurting you and our baby. We will be parents soon, Tamia. I want you protected at all costs. I know you will do an excellent job, tell my men what to look for, and they will bring it, but I can’t let my wife out of my sight,” He said and bent to kiss my lower belly.

“I have wanted this all my life. A mate that genuinely loves my family and me. Now that I have you, I can’t be careless, Tamia. Please. Do not push it. These people are dangerous. They took Bryce’s

pregnant mate. I am not saying you are weak or can’t defend yourself, but they are cunning and unknown. There is nothing more difficult than fighting the unknown,” he said and touched my hand.

“Please, my love, do not argue with me on this one,” he pleaded and kissed my hand.

“I want you to instruct my men, and they will do as you have requested. Share your thoughts with Theodore and Marcel, but I won’t let you play detective. If you are bored, think of something to do for the All-regional games that does not involve you participating in the sports activities,” He said. I knew he needed me to say yes. He was genuinely afraid, and I could see it. So I nodded.

“Basically, what I need are journals, notes however insignificant. If I can’t go, at least let Theodore or Marcel lead the search. Finding these items isn’t the only important thing. How and where they are found matters. It can say a lot and give us more information than the items themselves,” I said, and he sighed.

“Very well, we will all go there. I will not let you out of my sight, Tamia. I won’t.” he said, and laid back down and pulled me close. He sucked on my sweet spot gently.

“I won’t survive if I lose you. If anything ever happens to you, my darling, I will become the Dark Alpha,” he said, and as much as it sounded like a joke, I knew he was serious.

We both fell asleep, and I woke up in the night.

It was nine at night, so I decided to walk to Avery’s wing to check on her. She had been depressed lately, and I knew it was because of my pregnancy.

I knew she feared something was wrong with her, just like I was. I was sure she was alright and would happen soon, but I needed to ensure she was okay.

I left my room barefooted so I don't wake Sylvester. He was sleeping peacefully, and he needed the rest.

While I walked down the halls barefooted, causing me to have stealth, I heard someone whispering on the phone. I did not like eavesdropping, but these were dangerous times, so I leaned closer to listen.

"It is too tight right now; I can't get it for you. You will have to wait and let things loosen up a bit. Maybe during the games," A voice that sounded like Lily said. Then I heard her hang up and approach, so I hid behind a door. She walked out of the corner she was hiding and looked about to be sure the coast was clear before leaving.

I knew women from the harem were not allowed phones, and Sylvester never told me she had special privileges. Whatever she was doing, she was up to no good, and I wondered what she was asked to procure that would need to be done during the games when the security wasn't so tight anymore. I planned on telling Sylvester and having the woman investigated. She was scornful and might try to hurt us for it.

I walked and bumped into Stephanie, the last person I wanted to see.

~Tamia~

Stephanie did not look well. Her eyes were swollen, and her hands were shaking. It was clear that she had been crying.

I wanted to ignore her, but I couldn't. I knew Sylvester wouldn't, so I decided to show some concern.

"Are you alright?" I asked, and she looked at me and shook her head.

"I am not, Tamia. Everything is falling apart. Dominic won't come out of his room. He said he feels like a nobody. I have tried to talk him out of it, but he is too ashamed to let himself mingle," She said, and I nodded.

“You need to give him time, Stephanie. He had a near-death experience. If Bryce had not confessed, he might have been dead by now. He will need time to recover from it,” I said, and she hugged me and began to cry.

I did not know what to tell her. So I hugged her in return and patted her back.

“You need to take it easy, Stephanie. Crying won’t fix him. You need to find the things and people that make him happy and try to surround him with them,” I said, and she sighed and bowed.

She looked at me and studied me.

“You will be the Lady of the north soon, Tamia; there are things I need to tell you. Things that I swore to take to my grave but I suspect are part of why all these are happening to my sons,” She said, and I was surprised that she was willing to trust me with her secret.

“Are you sure you want to tell me?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“You will be Luna soon and rule by his side. You’re already doing it, and unlike me, your Alpha loves you and gives you freedom. You take part in council discussions and give advice. None of which I was allowed in my time. You give northern women hope, Tamia.” She said and sighed.

“There are things I need to tell for the sake of the Volkov bloodline. You need to know that you have a Volkov growing inside you. You need to know the truth about Maurice and our children..” She said, and my mind went to what Jake had told me.

Was she planning on telling me the truth, or was she planning on deceiving me like she might have deceived her children?

“Does it have anything to do with what is going on?” I asked, and she paused, looking at me. She was contemplating what to tell me. She was sizing me up, and I wasn’t angry at all.

“It might,” she confessed, and I looked at her.

“I will join you in your room in a few minutes. I want to check on Avery. The hallway isn’t as safe as we think; we might have spies lurking about the place,” I linked her, and she nodded at me.

I still could not shake off Lily's phone conversation. I could not shake off the fact that I knew she wasn't supposed to have a phone. I couldn't shake it off. Something was off, and I planned on figuring it out.

Stephanie walked past me, heading to her room while I headed towards the Beta's wing to see Avery. I would have checked on Linda too, but I knew she and Marcel went on a date.

I got to Avery's door and knocked.

"It's open," I heard Avery say, and I gently let myself in. I saw my friend sitting on a couch and working on an embroidery piece. I looked at the leaf design she was weaving into the fabric and realised that her skill had improved, but she was still marring the fabric.

"Tamia, you and Sylvester missed dinner," She said, and I nodded and sat beside her.

"How are you feeling?" I asked, and she sighed.

"I feel nervous," She said, and I wondered why.

"Why?" I asked, and she sighed and put down her supposed artwork, which was more of a cluster and an honest attempt at being creative.

"I have wanted babies for as long, but when Michelle came into our lives, it became a tall dream. Now I found love again. Marcel and I started trying before you and Sylvester got together. Then Linda and Theodore got together," She said and bowed her head and began to weep.

"Yet I am still waiting in line, Tamia. I waited in line with Max, and I believe that was why Michelle got the best of him, and now here I am with Marcel," she said, and I moved close to her and rubbed her back.

"Do not be afraid, Avery; it will happen for you, too," I said, rubbing her back.

"But when?" She asked, and I sighed.

"You should see a doctor to know if anything is wrong and if it can be corrected. That is what I would do," I said, and she broke the hug and stared at me.

“You are right, Tamia,” She said and held my hand.

“Join me at the hospital tomorrow, please,” She said, and I remembered my conversation with Sylvester about protection and not being on my own.

“I suggest you go with Marcel. It would be best if you handled it together,” I said, and she shook her head.

“I want you to come with me, Tamia. I do not want Marcel. What if something is wrong with me? He will know and might change his mind. I love him, Tamia; I can’t lose him,” She said with genuine fear in her eyes.

“Nothing is the matter with you, Avery. I will speak to Sylvester to let me follow you to the hospital,” I said to ease her mind, and she thanked me.

I tried to counsel her to the best of my ability and decided to leave because I did not want to keep Stephanie waiting.

My actions might have seemed a bit stupid. Whatever Stephanie wanted to tell me must have been serious, so it was wrong to put her on hold, but I knew that whatever she was going to tell me might leave me shellshocked, and I won’t be able to check on my friend, so I wanted to get it out of the way before speaking to Stephanie.

I walked still barefooted so people could not hear my footsteps. I took a mental note to do this often. Lily was on my watch list. I needed to know who gave her a phone and who she was communicating with.

I got to Stephanie’s door and knocked.

“Please come in, Tamia; I know it is you,” She said, and I let myself in.

“Lock the door,” She said, and I did as she said and approached her where she sat on the couch in her room.

I went to sit with her, and she smiled at me. I was still wary of her, but I let it be because she was open to me again. There were only two possibilities: to misguide or tell the truth, so I was attentive.

“I am sorry to ask you this question, but I need you to be honest. How did it feel when Leo met his fated?” She asked, and I looked at her. I contemplated answering it, but I knew I had to, or the conversation won’t make headway.

“Heartwrenching. My life was over. He was the lead alpha of the East; I had nowhere to go, and no one would want me. I could not leave, so I was there through it all until the north attacked and gave me a chance to escape,” I said, and she looked at me stunned.

“Yes, I gave myself as a tribute to leave Leo. We would have subdued the people who attacked us, but I did not want to be the third wheel in their home anymore. They were going to be a family. There was no place for me,” I said, and she looked at me worried, but I smiled at her.

“I am glad,” I said and placed my hand on my belly. “I found love in the north and everything I ever wanted.” I told her, and she smiled.

“Do you know if Leo were Sylvester, then truly you would have nowhere to go? Sylvester is a step up from Leo, but no one is a step up from the Wolf lord. So, in that case, you will be stranded forever, and even if you want to leave him, it would be impossible. Society won’t allow it, your family won’t allow it, and your heart and wolf will hold on so tight, and it won’t allow it. There is something in us that seeks the dominant male,” She said, and I wondered why she was saying such things.

“I didn’t call you here to discuss your relationship.” She said and sighed. I called you here to discuss mine.

“Something my sons did not know was that their father had a fated,” she said, and I exclaimed, pretending not to know so she could give me her version of the story.

“Everyone that knew was sworn to secrecy by Maurice. Her name was Alissa Pavlishchev, and she was from Gad in the western region. Only the people in the council and older western Alphas knew of her.” She said.

“Maurice loved me wholeheartedly until he met her. He never slept with anyone. Like Sylvester is with you, my husband was that way with me. Maybe not exactly, but you get the picture,” she said, and her eyes welled up in tears.

“I loved Maurice with all my heart, and I thought our lives would be rosy, but I was wrong. He met Alissa and took her as his mistress. My family and the

council did not let him claim her because that would insult me, so he slept with her and made me endure unimaginable pain. The woman wasn't a saint, either. They never are. It is not by choice but by design. No fated would want to be a mistress. They see us as taking their space, so they would do anything to replace us fully and not share their mate.

She plotted against me and manipulated my husband.

She was the one that made him start the war frenzy. When my family and part of the council pushed back, Maurice moved to eliminate them to make her Lady and his Luna; I had given up hope. I had Dominic then, and he wasn't an Alpha, so I knew my days with Maurice were numbered. When she got pregnant, I left the estate and returned home with Dominic. Maurice did not look for me. He doted on her and loved her, but he never claimed her. The woman was so wicked that her people refused to come and work in the estate to help her. If you think I am lying, you can investigate. Because of this, Maurice forced me to return and be her midwife. I was maltreated and abused. He would beat me because of her and her lies, and she never ran out of lies. I was tired. If it was a lesser Alpha, I could run, but who would challenge the wolf lord for my sake? I knew I wouldn't be able to leave until he let me go.

The goddess took pity on me and she died giving birth to her son. Maurice lost his mind. First, he said I poisoned her and had me locked up in a cell, but it was proven that she died of a dangerous case of preeclampsia. I was released and asked to care for the child, but I refused. I told Maurice I would not touch his bastard because that was what the boy was. Maurice felt guilty for locking me up, so he did not try to force me to care for the child. Soon he found out all the lies she told about me. When the boy turned one, Maurice found out he had an Alpha wolf, so he sent him to Grizlo in the north to be cared

for by a small family. Around that time, I was pregnant with Sylvester, but things weren't the same. Although Maurice loved me, the loss of his mate destroyed him, and he found himself drawn to women of the west who looked like her, so he started actively keeping a harem. He conquered the entire west for other reasons but took their women so he could replace Alissa briefly. I handled it well, had Sylvester, and when Maurice found that Sylvester was an Alpha, his love for me increased, and Alissa and her son faded away." She said and looked at me.

“That boy’s name is David Pavlishchev. Maurice did not give him his last name because he was a bastard.” She concluded, and I was in shock.

“That bastard was why I left here, Tamia. I went to see if I could find out about his whereabouts because he was the only one that would want to kill my sons. He is the only one who will have something to gain from this. Dominic and Sylvester do not know of his existence. I told Dominic yesterday, he didn’t take it well. That is why I am telling you this so you can help me tell Sylvester. We need to find David and be sure he isn’t behind all this. I do not have proof; I am just speculating, but I know you are good with investigations. I will need you to carry one out for me and figure it out,” She said, but I was too dumbfounded to respond.

~Tamia~

Shock could not describe how I felt after Stephanie had told me everything.

I sat on the couch and stared at her, speechless.

“Why are you trusting me with this level of information, Luna Stephanie?” I asked her, and she wiped away her tears.

Going down memory lane was hard for her, and I could see she loved her husband dearly, just like I loved Leo, and I wouldn’t have let him go.

To be fair to her, I could understand her predicament, which was why I had to let Devin go when he came to me.

I couldn’t be selfish and crush the one person that dared to love me through my pain.

My heart truly belonged to Sylvester. I was lucky.

Stephanie did not have a Sylvester that would sweep her off her feet and rescue her, so she had to deal, but hearing her open up to me like this made me afraid.

I wasn’t her best person; in fact, there was friction between us, and I doubted it would change. For her to tell me this meant she was desperate.

I tried to remain calm while I waited for her to respond.

“I think he is behind this, Tamia,” she said and bowed.

“He might feel cheated. He is an Alpha, and he is older than Sylvester. If he weren’t a bastard, he would have been the lord of the north. I am sure he knows I am the reason Maurice could not marry his

mother properly,” she said, and I wondered if she was speaking from knowledge and not just a hunch. There was no way she wouldn’t know what was going on in this David’s mind if she wasn’t privy to it.

I looked at her for a bit.

“Are you sure about these things?” I asked her, and she nodded.

“I can’t lie about this,” She responded, and I wanted to beg to differ, but I held my tongue.

“You know if I tell Sylvester about this man, he will hunt him down, and there will be no going back from this,” I said and sighed.

“Are you sure he is a threat to my mate?” I asked her, letting her know Sylvester was my first concern, and she nodded. I smiled because I had her right where I wanted her.

“In that case, I need you to come clean about it. Tell me how you are so sure this man is a threat?” I asked her, and she looked at me and nodded her head.

“I do not know how to explain it, Tamia, but I just have a hunch. At least let us find him, and then we will know what to do from there,” She explained, and I understood what she wanted from me.

Stephanie wasn’t sure of her hunch, and she knew Sylvester would not have a subtle approach, and his approach could aggravate this David. She wanted me to tell Sylvester about David and make sure he is subtle about it.

“Very well then..” I said, and just then, I heard Sylvester’s voice in my head.

“Where are you?” He said, and I knew he had woken up and wondered where I had gone.

I got off the couch and looked at my barefoot.

“On my way back to you, darling,” I linked with him, and he was quiet.

“I have to go back,” I told Stephanie, and she nodded and looked at me.

“I am truly happy for both of you. I know it may not seem so, but I am. I am also begging you not to break his heart, Tamia. Susan left my baby wounded, which is why I have been uptight. Please.” She said and looked at my tummy.

“I am sure you two will make a great family,” She said, and I smiled at her.

“I cannot hurt him, Stephanie, and he knows it. I love him with everything I am, and I have turned my back on everything just to be with him. My love and heart are in his hands. I hope he does not break me,” I said, and she could not speak.

I did not owe her the explanation that I had rejected my fated for his sake. That was to remain between Sylvester and me, but she needed to know that I was in my relationship a hundred per cent, and I did not plan on ever letting my man go.

I hugged her and assured her everything would be alright before leaving her room and heading towards mine. I bumped into Lilly on my way, and she looked at my foot.

One thing I noticed was she was lurking around our corridors too much. I know Sylvester was easy on her, but this wasn't her wing.

“Good Evening, Luna,” She said to me, already according me the respect of Luna.

“Hello, Lilly,” I said, and she looked at my barefoot.

“Is that because you are pregnant?” She asked me with a tinge of jealousy, and I smiled.

“No, dear, it is so I can sneak around the place unnoticed,” I said and walked away from her.

I felt her eyes on me, and I turned to wink at her.

I wanted her relaxed and a little bit on edge simultaneously. She was bound to make mistakes faster when on edge than when relaxed.

“I entered the room and went to bed. Sylvester wrapped his arm around me and kissed my neck.

“The bed was cold,” he said, and I turned to look at him.

“Since when did a cold bed start troubling you?” I asked, wanting to laugh.

“When you started sleeping in it, Tamia,” He said in his low deep voice, and it made me shiver in a good way. Sylvester knew how to turn me on, and this was one of those.

He came on top, and I knew the night would be longer than expected.

We had breakfast in the morning with our friends, and Sylvester brought up the investigation.

“I will want us to go through the things in late Jenny’s house,”

Sylvester said, and Marcel looked at him.

“Have you told the Lawrences about it? Especially Vino. She might be occupying a Babanin seat, but she is still his aunt.” Marcel said, and I was a bit surprised that Jenny was Vino’s aunt, but the name was a dead giveaway. She was Jenny Lawrence; I just thought she was a different Lawrence. In light of this, things were a bit confusing in my head.

“I do not need permission, especially when I am trying to figure out why she was killed,” Sylvester said, and Marcel nodded.

“Sign me up,” Linda said immediately, and Theodore looked a bit pissed at her.

I understood why she committed herself quickly because she knew he would try to stop her because of the pregnancy.

“Are you sure it is the best way to go?” Marcel asked Sylvester, and he nodded.

“I knew my mother wasn’t the target of that attack. Jenny might have been involved in something or known something to be eliminated.” Sylvester said, and Marcel sighed.

“What about the wire transfers that Lily was working on? Does it show any funds leading to or from Jenny? We have to check everything knowing that your father almost wiped them out.” Marcel asked.

“They should lead somewhere,” Marcel added, and I remembered her phone call and contemplated bringing it up.

“All those anonymous transfers lead to the south, and now some are going east. I have asked Lily to take a break. I cannot leave her with a computer unattended, and I want to spend time with Tamia. So I will find another way to trace the transfers,” Sylvester said and touched my hand. He kissed it, making my body shake.

“I am worried that some people are stationing people in the east and west. With what has happened recently, I hope an attack that would be blamed on the north will not ensue. We are yet to understand why the transfers and the people they are going to are anonymous. I can’t shake off the fact that everything is directed at destroying my family. The fact that my father had many enemies does not help matters either. I am thinking of reaching out to the distant Volkovs for help,” He confessed, and I touched his hand.

“Very well, what time do we go to Jenny’s house, and how many of us are going?” Theodore asked. Sylvester smiled and kissed my hand again.

“See it more like a date because we are bringing our mates with us,” he said, and Marcel shook his head.

“Avery and I have a doctor’s appointment this morning,” He said, and Sylvester shrugged.

“Go and return. Pending on what the doctor says will determine whether or not Avery will be coming,” He said, and Marcel nodded and thanked him.

After the serious discussion, we returned to our food, and Sylvester could not keep his hands off my body. He got me all worked up that I might have gone on top of him in that room.

He breathed in my scent and ensured his pinewood scent surrounded me. He nibbled my ears and sucked on my sweet spot.

“My mark will be there soon, darling. You will be truly mine,” He linked me, and a faint moan escaped my lips. The room was a bit blurry, and he was getting me worked up.

“I am already yours,” I linked him back, and I felt his tongue brush through, making my body shiver and the hairs on my skin stand because of the goosebumps his action produced.

“Sylvester..” I moaned, and he placed a grape in my mouth, allowing his finger to enter my mouth. I sucked on it to let him know the work I could do to his cock. He felt it because Knight growled, and Kaira purred in my head.

“You two should get a room,” I heard someone say, but I was too far gone to know who did. It was between Linda and Avery.

We finished breakfast, and Sylvester and I returned to our bedroom.

I was wet and horny, but at the same time, I needed to tell him about Lily.

We entered the room, and he rushed at me, ready to take me. As much as I wasn't selfish, he had ignited a fire that needed attention, so I let him go to work on my body.

It was a passion-filled morning, and I confessed to all sorts of things.

He made me say something that I wouldn't have on a typical day while hitting the right spot; with his intoxicating scent and the love I felt in my heart, I could promise him the moon, which wasn't mine to give by the way, but I could hypothetically give it to him because he had taken me there and back and he knew it.

We lay on the bed tired, with my head against his chest. I kissed his chest, and he touched my back gently.

I thought of the few times I heard of him while I was in the east.

If anyone told me he would be the love of my life back then, I wouldn't believe them, but the funny part was there was no day that I judged or resented him. It helped me decide to come to the north, and I was glad I did.

“I need to talk to you about something,” I said, and he made both of us sit so he could look into my eyes. He looked worried, so I smiled at him to be calm.

“Are the women in the Harem allowed to have cell phones?” I asked him, and he froze.

“I can’t let them have cell phones, Tamia; that will defeat the purpose of keeping them in check. They can also betray the north and easily sell information that way,” he said, placing his hand on my cheek. He thought I wanted him to give them cell phones. It was cute.

“I know you are a kind woman, but please do not ask me to give them a phone. Please do not ask me to endanger the north.” He said, and I shook my head and kissed his hand on my cheek by turning towards it. I used my hand to gently hold his palm against my face and closed my eyes to relish the feeling.

“I need you to act rational and wisely about what I am about to tell you. Promise me you won’t lose your shit,” I said, and he looked confused.

“Last night, I decided to check on Avery in her wing, so I left barefoot, knowing my attempt to wear something on my feet would wake you up. While I walked down the hallways, I heard a voice. I hid behind the door to listen; it was Lily talking on a phone. She told someone that things were a bit tight and she couldn’t get something for the person and that the person should wait until during the all-region game when security is loose,” I said, and I saw rage rise in his eyes. Sylvester looked like he was about to kill someone, and I hoped it was nothing for Lily’s sake.

~Sylvester~

I could not believe what Tamia had just told me about Lily.

I was so mad that I knew Knight could emerge.

I looked at my mate, and she did not seem like she was joking.

From the look in her green eyes, it took a lot of effort for her to tell me what she had just divulged.

I raised my hand, patted her head gently, and then kissed her lips. It was more to calm myself down than to tell her I was okay.

I knew I needed to be calm to handle the matter.

Lily was a big problem. If she was betraying me, then I was in trouble because she knew of my investigations, and she was helping me with one of them.

What if she was giving out the information to someone else?

I had always suspected I couldn't trust her, but when she came, she was innocent-looking, and I thought I could have the younger sister I never had.

I revoked her privileges when I heard all the awful things she did to the women in the harem.

I did not want to jump to conclusions, but I wanted to get up and go and find out the truth.

I was about to get up when Tamia stopped me with her hand.

"I have not finished talking to you, darling. Please be calm. I hope there is a rational explanation for what I heard and saw," She said, and I searched her eyes, my soul pleading, hoping that whatever she

needed to tell me next would be easy to digest.

"Here goes," She said and sighed.

"After the incident with Lily, I bumped into your mother." She said, and I held my tongue. I did not want to say anything that would change the topic.

"She was crying, and she requested to speak to me immediately. Of course, I went to see Avery and then returned to your mother's room." She said and squeezed my arm.

"Your mother explained why she left the estate in a hurry that day Dominic was arrested, and what she went to do," she said.

"According to her, your father had a fated called Lady Alissa Pavlishchev," She continued, and I exclaimed. Tamia just nodded gradually and continued what she was saying.

"Your father accepted his fated and made your mother share. She did not have you then, and when the woman was pregnant, your mother left with Dominic. Things happened, and your mother was asked to return to care for her. All the while, he tried to divorce your mother, but her family was too important for him to divorce her successfully, so he started conquering the council families and the west. He wanted to own the world and be powerful enough to overthrow the council and marry this woman. According to your

mother, the woman was evil and did many mean things. Eventually, she died giving birth to her son. This was relieving to your mother, but that was the beginning of your father growing his harem and getting involved with the women in the harem. He only went for women of western descent because they reminded him of his fated. Your father realised the boy was an Alpha, so he tried to get your mother to take care of the baby, but she said no, so he sent the boy to be cared for. She got pregnant with you, and everything became rosy after she gave birth to you, and he discovered you were an Alpha too.” She said and searched my eyes for emotions, but I made sure there was nothing in them so she would have the confidence to tell me the rest.

“When your mother left, it wasn’t an act of defiance, but to find David Pavlishchev, your half-brother, because she believed he might be the culprit. He has so much to gain if anything happens to either of you,” she said, and I knew she was right.

“Did my mother tell you his last known location?” I asked, and she shook her head.

“Very well, I will handle it,” I said, and she smiled.

She laid down a bit, and I held her in bed until she fell asleep.

It was time to go to the only part of the mansion I never visit. The Harem. I linked Theodore to meet me there with two women from my staff.

I kept my anger under control and moved swiftly.

When I got to the common hall of the harem, the entire place was silent. I had never visited there since the women had been brought. The last I was there was when we were actively involved with the former women in the harem before I let all of them go.

Marcel, Theodore and I threw orgies there and partied all night long. Thinking of the life I led back then; I was ashamed of myself and grateful that Tamia brought meaning and love back into my life because Susan left with everything, and I was nothing but an empty shell.

Most of the ladies were looking at me seductively, and I ignored them. My eyes searched and found Lily, who smiled at me.

I motioned her to come to me, and she approached eagerly.

“Take me to your bedroom,” I said, and I heard some women gasp. I knew what they were thinking, but I did not owe anyone any explanation.

We waited for Theodore to join us before leaving. I could see the giddiness in Lily’s eyes, and I remained silent.

“I hope Luna Tamia won’t be mad about this Alpha. I do not want to anger luna,” She said with a sly tone, and I wanted to hit her, but I controlled myself. If what Tamia said checked out, she would have betrayed me beyond repair. I was holding my temper.

“What is going on?” Theodore linked me.

“Be attentive,” was all I could manage, and he was silent.

We got to Lily’s room which she shared with two other girls, and I entered.

The room was beautifully furnished, and three beds were placed in it. Beside each bed was a vanity table. It looked like a luxurious hostel, which was the point, and Lilly stood with her head bowed.

I knew what she was thinking, and she began to undo her tunic to confirm my suspicion. I could feel her joy and expectation. I had never given her the sign that I wanted anything sensual with her, but I knew it was a fantasy in her head, and it almost cost me my relationship with Tamia.

“Keep your clothes on,” I ordered quietly. She looked confused but nodded.

“I am at your service, Alpha,” She said with her head bowed.

“Where is your bed?” I asked, and she eagerly pointed to the bed close to the wall. I linked the women that came with us to search through her things.

Lily became apprehensive immediately.

“What is going on, Alpha?” She said, looking worried.

“Hold her, Theodore,” I told my Gamma, and he did as I had said.

“Where is the phone, Lily?” I asked her and her eyes widened.

“Do not bother lying because people told me you have one. Where did you put it?” I asked her, and she bowed her head and began to sob.

“Where is it!” I yelled, feeling my anger bubbling to the surface at the realisation that there was indeed a phone and Tamia was right.

“Inside the mattress under my bed,” She confessed. The women lifted her mattress, and there the phone was.

They brought it to me, and it had no number and no messages, but the call log had an anonymous caller on it. The person was wise to hide their caller identity when calling.

“How did you get this?” I asked her calmly, and she sobbed. I tried to hold my temper because I knew I could kill her.

“What have you given them?” I asked her, and she continued to cry.

“Answer me!” I yelled with my authority, and she shook.

She struggled and broke away from Theodore and went on her knees.

“I am sorry, Alpha. I am sorry. They promised I would go home but threatened they would wipe my family out if I did not comply,” she said without answering my question.

“Do not test my patience, Lily. What did you give them, and who were you speaking to?” I asked her, and she began to sob.

“They did not give me a name. Sometimes it was a woman and sometimes a man,” She said, and I grabbed her neck and squeezed.

“What did you give them?” I asked, angry.

“Sylvester?” I heard Tamia’s voice in my head, and I cursed under my breath because I wasn’t expecting her to be awake.

“Sylvester?” I heard her voice again, and I released Lilly’s neck.

“Yes, darling, I am in Lily’s room; you are right,” I said, and she did not reply. I knew she was on her way.

“What did you give them?”

“Banking details, signatures, royal seals, envelopes, and I placed a backdoor on your computer to help them monitor what you were doing,” She said quickly, and I slapped her.

She fell to the ground. I was enraged.