

Forged In The Flames Chapter 11

Forged In The Flames

Chapter 11 A Trip Down Memory Lane

Nikolas POV

I spent the entire day with my mother and Aliana. Nothing seemed more important than being there, watching how Aliana cared for my mother and comforted her.

Aliana was good at caring for people, and I could understand why she easily wore the Luna shoes.

There were awkward moments between us, but we let them pass quickly, and she did an excellent job of masking her emotion. One thing I was certain about was that she genuinely cared for my mother's well-being, which just showed she was kind hearted. I wondered how she might have been Gabriel's daughter. Her mother must have had a heart of gold.

Once it was evening and we had fed my mother, I left her to attend to pack matters in my office.

Getting there, Delta Grant and Gamma Ingham were fuming.

I could tell they were angry, but their rage must have been insignificant because Qusack was in high spirits.

"And you finally grace us with your presence after blocking us out all day," Qusack said with a knowing look on his face. They were all sitting on the couch in the office.

"I got to feed and spend time with my mother for the first time in a long time," I said and sat on my chair.

Ingham leaned forward, and so did Grant too, and their faces looked concerned and angry. They might have tried to mask it from fear but were doing a horrible job at it. "You mean you got to spend time with your slave w*ho*re," Ingham said, and I looked at him. I did not know why I felt rage, but he had crossed the line there.

"What, Alpha? Do you think we do not know? Do you think we do not see it? You always stare at her, you no longer want to party or have fun. It is almost as if she has bewitched you, but you would argue it isn't the case since only Lycans possess special abilities, but just look at how low you have descended.

There are many beautiful, sophisticated Lycan women you can spend your time with, you choose to spend it with a slave w*ho*re, the daughter of the man that turned your

mother into that, killed your father and stole his kingdom. Have you lost sight of your goal?" Gamma Ingham said, and I was tongue-tied from rage and confusion. "You are losing yourself, your highness. Yesterday I heard you decided to start paying those things wages, and you reduced their workload, you also prohibited our men from disciplining them. I know it is because of that b*itc*h. How can you let yourself lose sight of your mission."

"This is the time to take a lycan Luna from a prestigious family and apply for Kingship, instead, you are having private dates with a w*ho*re and skipping your duties," Delta Grant said, and I banged my hand on the table. Bane was enraged.

"Do not forget who you are speaking to," I warned them sternly, and they fell back and bowed their head.

"Calm down, Niko. They would not repeat themselves again. I had warned them they would be overstepping. Tell me how the queen is," Qusack asked me, and I got up.

They had really pissed me off, so I wasn't in the mood to discuss anything with them again. "Where are you going?" Qusack asked me.

"To sleep. We will revisit this tomorrow, and subsequently, my evenings will be occupied. I will spend it with my mother," I said, looking at Ingham and Grant, then left the room.

Everything they said to me struck a nerve, and I did not know if they were right about me losing sight of our mission or not. I just showed Aliana some kindness and kept my word.

How is keeping my word weakness?

I do not play cheap tricks on people and will never give what I can't. Ingham and Grant had overstepped with me, but I also needed to watch how I behaved in public where Aliana was concerned because I was sl*ipping up, which might cause them to question my resolve.

I showered and decided to go to bed early.

I felt uncomfortable, and Aliana not being with me meant I would have a terrible night. I looked forward to holding her, but after what Grant and Ingham had said, it kind of snapped me back to reality and helped me draw the line again.

After tossing and turning most of the night, I sat up in bed and thought of what had happened to my mother.

FLASHBACK TO WHEN NIKOLAS WAS TEN_ YEARS-OLD

My mother and I moved through the woods. We had been hunting a deer all morning and knew we would get lucky soon. During our hunt, she would stop and ask me to go ahead.

As much as she tried to hide it, I knew what was happening.

Her sanity was slipping, and she was trying all she could to hold on to it.

Normally she would chain herself to a tree by our cave so the episode could come and pass. There were times it would take a few hours, and sometimes it would take days.

The last one she had, lasted a week. We knew the day would come when she might not regain her sanity again, and I dreaded it I was just ten years old, and I had no wolf. I just needed her to hold on a little longer until I got my wolf.

Then, I could be her Alpha, and she would have a pack.

She would no longer be a rogue, and her sanity would be safe.

My mother had cared for me in the woods all my life. She told me of my father, a powerful Lycan king who was betrayed by some of his subjects, the werewolves. They had teamed up to take over his kingdom.

My father was a kind king. Even though Werewolves were inferior to Lycans, he treated them nicely. My father was kind and accommodating, unlike the other two kings, who put them in their place by taking away their freedom.

Little did he know that would be the death of him.

My mother said she had warned him considerably, but he refused to listen, always looking for a bright angle.

One day the Werewolves teamed up, led by the treacherous Gabriel Nowak. They poisoned my father's officers and his loyal Lycan subjects and took over his kingdom.

They killed him and would have killed my mother even though she was pregnant with me. She had to escape to ensure that I survived. She had been on her own ever since. She roamed the woods hiding from werewolves that were hunting her and Lycans that believed my father was a traitor for accommodating werewolves.

She could not go to the other Kings because they also believed my father was a traitor for allowing werewolves to have freedom, so we were on our own.

She had held on to her sanity to train and protect me.

My mother had taught me how to defend myself and what to do when I saw rogues.

She ensured we were fed, and even though we had to move occasionally, she ensured we had a roof over our heads. She also ensured I could read and write because she dreamed that I would recover all that was stolen from my family one day. I would take back my father's kingdom and avenge his death.

Every day from age four, she would make me promise that her sacrifice would not be in vain. I did not only make the promise to please her, but I did so because it was the right thing to do. When I turned seven, she began battling her sanity, which scared me.

"If I ever lose it and I do not regain my senses, promise me, you will put me down, Nikolas," She would say every time she returned to her senses. It was a promise I had refused to make no matter how many times she had asked. "Do not let me kill you, Niko. A feral wolf is an empty shell of its old self, it knows and loves no one. All it wants to do is harm and kill. Do not leave me at the mercy of Lycan hunters, do not leave me at the mercy of the unknown. I want you to hold me with the chains and stab my heart with the silver blade," she instructed me. She had kept the blade in our cave and sharpened it every fourth night to make it easier to use.

I was only seven.

It was too much for a child to bear, too much for me to process, and too much to handle.

I would nod so she would drop the topic, but I knew I could not do it.

Three years down the line, she slipped in and out of sanity often, every time it was about to happen, she would chain herself with silver to a tree so she could not shift, and that would make her an easy kill for me, but today we were a bit far from our cave, so I wondered what would happen.

"We will soon catch the deer," My mother said, trying to cover her struggle, but I knew.

"Let's go back, momma, we can always hunt some other time. I will settle for potatoes and mushrooms today. They are tasty," I said, wanting to discourage her from hunting the deer because I knew she was doing it for me. She wanted me to have meat, but I did not want her to lose her mind out here.

"Just a little while longer, Niko, and we will head back," she said, shifting into her wolf.

We were lycans, so unlike the weres, we could stand on our hind legs and use our arms. She pounced on a deer and used her jaws to break its neck. The sound always made me cringe, but we needed to kill to survive.

I moved closer to celebrate her victory, that was when she looked at me with red eyes. Not black but red eyes.

Lycans had black eyes, Weres had yellow or golden eyes, and ferals had red eyes. She looked at me and bared her teeth with a roar. The deer's blood dripped on the sides. I stepped back, ready to run.

"Momma," I said, afraid. She growled at me. Tears began to sting my eyes because I knew what had happened.

She should have listened to me and returned to our cave.

I began to sob because I knew I would have to run for my life, but I also knew she did not want to be left at the mercy of the forest.

"Momma, please come back to me," I said in tears, frozen and afraid. Ready to run but unwilling to leave her.

"Momma, please," I said, and she growled, ready to pounce on me. She did not know me anymore. So, I stepped back and bolted.

She growled, and I heard her chasing me. My mind was reeling with the worst outcome, and I was scared.

I had no wolf. I was just ten years old, going on eleven. How was I going to save myself and her? We were going to die. She would kill me, and the Lycan hunters would put her down.

I saw a cave big enough for me to squeeze in but too small for her to enter. I ran into it and stared at my mother.

It was a tiny cave, so my back touched the wall when I sat there. I faced the entrance with my heart in my mouth. I was sobbing, and my mother was growling at me. She wasn't intelligent enough to reach in with her hand and pull me by my legs, so she kept trying to get in head first, and her attempts were futile.

My mother's wolf growled at me, trying to get in, but the stone was hard for her to break through. Tears fell from my eyes as I watched her try to attack me.

I remembered all she told me about our lives, hatred boiled in me.

I hated the Weres for what they did to us, and I hated Gabriel Nowak for not showing her mercy, knowing she was pregnant. We did not deserve any of this. They ruined my family by stealing our home. I wept and watched my mother, who was now a feral wolf, do her best to try to kill me. Evening came, and my mother's wolf got tired and plopped down in front of the cave. I remained vigilant.

She soon fell asleep, and I thought of what to do next. I needed to touch her with the silver chain so she would be weak and shift to her human form. Then I can tie her before she regains some of her strength.

I snuck out and bolted towards our cave. It wasn't long before I started running that she gave chase again.

Luckily, I got to the cave, and the chain was lying on the ground.

I dived to touch it.

I fell on the chain, and my mother's wolf grabbed my leg and turned me around.

I held on to the chain even though it burned, ready to throw it at her, and she clawed at my left eye.

I closed my eyes, but she tore the skin on my eyelid and part of my cheek. She was about to reach for my throat when I threw the chain around her wolf's neck.

The sizzling sound of burning flesh came, and I watched her painfully shift back to her human form

Knowing this was my window, even though my left eye was closed and I was bleeding from the wound, I used all my might to pull the chain and secure her against the tree close to our cave. I tightened the chain and secured it with a padlock.

My mother growled and growled until she passed out.

I lay on the floor in front of her and wept. She had asked me to kill her if she didn't come through.

I knew I wouldn't be able to do it. I hoped she would come through and hold on long enough for me to get my wolf.

She promised me that I was an alpha, and I hoped she was right because only an Alpha could fix it.

A week passed, and my mother did not come through. Months passed, and still nothing.

Luckily for me, we were deep in the woods, so no one invaded our space.

I fed her with rabbits and mushrooms. I wasn't a cook, and neither was I a hunter. I had no wolf, and I was only a child, but I had to wear a man's shoes.

I grew up quickly, and soon months turned into years.

She never came through.

I built a pack and conquered all the packs in the Forest territory that used to be my father's kingdom, but she never came through. It was finally time for me to enact my revenge on Gabriel Nowak.

He was the man that destroyed my life and family.

I planned to make him and his people feel unimaginable pain. I would put the werewolves in their place and strip Gabriel and his relatives of their honour.

I would make sure his lineage ends with him or whomever his child is, and when all is done, I will let him know why.

My mother's sacrifice will not be in vain, my father's death will be avenged, and my family's glory will be restored. But how could I keep those promises when I was falling for his innocent daughter, and I had no power over my emotions and my wolf? It was a great dilemma. How could I manage my feelings and still get justice for my family and people? I was in a quagmire.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 12

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Chapter 12 And Suddenly

Aliana POV

Spending the day with Nikolas to care for his mother was fun. I got to see his sensitive side, and it was amazing.

He loved her, and I could see it as he switched from the savage wicked rogue prince to a sensitive, sweet man. If his life were normal, whomever he ended up with would be lucky. I remembered our date night and the memory of the dance, him comforting me while I threw up, holding me under the shower and in the tub, the memory remained with me.

I had slipped up and tried to kiss him, but he had dodged. I saw it and pretended to have passed out.

I was grateful for that memory. I needed it.

I woke up wishing I was a Lycan. Maybe I would have stood a chance with him.

I believe something might have happened between us if I were his kind, but the divide was real, and it kept us apart regardless of what we were feeling.

I knew I could not allow myself to feel anything for him. No matter how good it got, he would one day mate with a Lycan he loves, which would be the end of it for me. He had indeed kept his promise and ruined me. It would be difficult for me even if he decided to let me go. It would be impossible for me to have a werewolf mate because werewolves hated Lycans too.

I thought he would send for me in the evening, but when Ania and Lisa brought my food and left, I knew I wouldn't be spending the night with Nikolas.

I woke up the next day and got ready for my work. Ania and Lisa brought breakfast, and we gossiped a bit before we got ready to go to the Queen's room.

I tried to link Nikolas to find out if he wanted to join us to care for his mother, but I met a wall. He had somehow blocked me off.

I was a bit ashamed and hurt about it. I pleaded with Ania to link him with the question to avoid getting in trouble.

She was successful, and my heart was broken. I guess I wasn't allowed to link him. "He said no and that you should prepare everything needed and leave the room when it is evening. He does not want to find you there when it is time for him to tend to her," She said with a tinge of sadness.

They believed I had feelings for him, and she had told me to be hopeful, but now she knew better.

"Very well, it means we have time to chat," I said with a smile, trying to make it seem like it did not bother me, but it bothered me a lot. Ania's smile dropped, and I knew she had something to tell.

"Tell me, it is okay," I said, bracing myself for it. "We are to remain there in the evening and assist him," she said, and I smiled.

"I am the only one that shouldn't be there. In other words, he does not want to see me," I said, and she nodded.

I shrugged my shoulders and brushed it aside. "Well, I have ample time to catch up on me-time," I said, and Lisa smiled.

"I am glad you are strong, Aliana. Unlike what Ania said, I am pleading with you not to get your heart invested. You are a werewolf, and our kinds don't mix. He wouldn't damn the rules for your sake because he plans to be King one day, meaning he would have to take a Lycan queen. Just enjoy the moment while it lasts, and hopefully, when he is satisfied, he will send you back to your father," She said.

I knew that was the most honest advice anyone had given me since I got into this mess.

I hugged her, fighting my tears because she was right, and we headed to the Queen's room.

I wasn't as jovial as I used to be. I worked like a machine. It was as if I was moving on muscle memory.

My mind was muddled up. I repeated awful things, and my hatred of Nikolas and the Lycans grew.

He did not have to do this to me. I could have still been a slave and had the opportunity to settle down with my kind. This was wicked, and the mixed signal he gave me was cold.

I was so carried away that the bowl of soup in my hand fell while I fed the Queen, and it burned both of us.

She screamed and snarled at me, then hit me with her hand.

I deserved it, while I picked up the broken pieces of the plate, my hands shook, and I was afraid.

Lisa and Ania weren't the only ones there, the three men Nikolas asked to help me with her were there, and I was scared. Most of it poured on me, but some splashed on her.

Tears streamed down my cheeks while I picked up the shards.

My hands were shaking, and my heart was beating fast.

I knew the door would soon open, and I had no idea what Nikolas would do to me. Lisa came to help me to steady my hands. I did not know I had cut myself in the process.

"Breathe, Aliana, please breathe," she said, and I looked at her, tears streaming down my cheek.

"I am scared," said. For the first time, I confessed that I was afraid. The same Nikolas that was kind to my people could take out his rage on them for this.

Just as I expected, the door burst open, and I looked up Nikolas entered with Gamma Ingham. I bowed my head immediately. Ania knelt in front of me and started pleading. "The plate accidentally slipped Alpha, it wasn't intentional," She said, and I heard Ingham laughing.

"I told you. How will the Queen heal when we have bound her with silver?" Ingham said, stating an obvious problem. However, I took the brunt of it.

"Look at me," I heard Nikolas command me, and I knew I had to look at him.

I looked up at him, and my fear would not allow me to form the right words. "Please," was all I could manage. He walked past me and went to his mother, who was already calm.

While he attended to his mother, Gamma Ingham came to me and pulled me by my hair. I stifled my cries because I did not want Nikolas's mother to be startled.

He pulled so tightly that I thought he planned to pull my hair out of my scalp.

"Please, please, please," I pleaded. "W*ho*res should be treated like w*ho*res," he said, tugging hard.

"Ingham!" Nikolas cautioned him. "Do not touch what is mine," He warned him, and the man let me go instantly, but it happened so fast that I fell.

I remained on my knees. "I hope you know what you are doing. Alpha. Your w*ho*re is high maintenance," He said, and Nikolas ordered him to get out. Ingham left, and so did the three men in the room.

"Next time, be more careful. This should not happen again. You may go," Nikolas said to me without looking at me, and I thanked him and scrambled to my feet.

I left him with Ania and Lisa and dreaded the days ahead.

What if that job is taken from me? I wondered what he would ask me to do.

While I walked, I wept and scolded myself. I was too caught up in myself that I got clumsy. Nikolas had let me off easy, but I wondered what the cost would be.

Two months passed, and Nikolas remained the same. I wasn't allowed to link him. I had to go through Ania and Lisa if I had to tell him anything.

I cared for his mother in the mornings and ensured I was out of sight in the evenings. He did not send for me, and I had let it go. I spent my free time reading and talking to my wolf. I missed shifting and going hunting. I missed the sun. It only touched my skin when I stood by the window in the mornings.

I wished my window faced the inner compound. I might have caught glimpses of my father and friends and maybe even gotten to wave at them, but my window faced the inner garden where the Lycan women swam, sunbathed, partied and did all sorts of things.

Nikolas attended some of the parties too. I usually turned off the light in my room during those hours so no one would see me when I peeked.

I envied all of them.

They were having the time of their lives, I wonder if my life would be this bad if I were a Lycan.

I tried to read books of weres turned into Lycans, but just as I had suspected, it was a myth. Some people believed it was used to explain away b*astar*ds in the olden days.

I would link with my father whenever I could. All he had to tell me were good things. I knew he was lying, but I lied to him, too, so we were even.

Another month passed, and nothing changed. I realised that would be my life henceforth.

Ania and Lisa were attending to something, so I had no choice but to attend to the Queen alone. When I got to her room, I found that she was sleeping. She was supposed to be awake. I decided to sit and wait for her, not wanting to trouble her to sleep.

That was when I heard the doorknob turn. To my dismay, Gamma Ingham entered, and I stood up immediately and bowed my head. "Good morning, Gamma," I said, and he did not bother to answer.

"Sitting idly," he said, and I did not respond. He walked to me and touched my chin to lift my head so I could look at him. He pressed my cheeks together with his fingers, and his eyes looked at me coldly.

"I won't let Alpha lose sight of his goal. Soon he would see you as what you are. A worthless werewolf and the daughter of a treacherous fool," he said, and I held my tongue.

I dared not scream because of the Queen, and I doubted I would be in the right if anything terrible happened.

The b*astar*d pushed me against the wall, making me hit the back of my head, and he began to ruff me up with his hands. Touching me. "Alpha will soon send you for general use, and I will teach you what we do to w*ho*res", he said, and I pushed his hands away when he tried to touch my b*rea*st.

He slapped me in response, and it was hard enough for me to taste blood in my mouth. "Did Alpha not tell you that you and your kind serve the four of us?" He asked me, squeezing my neck and breathing close to my ears. My knees and thighs were together, so he couldn't touch me because I knew what he wanted. I could feel his hard-on poking me.

"Take it up with him," I shot back, ready to d*ie.

I liked Nikolas, so it was okay for him to touch me. I wanted him to touch me, but this douchebag wouldn't get to do anything to me. As much as I loved my father, I would die first. He pulled away from me and then slapped me until I fell.

"I will treat you like the whore that you are. I will make your life miserable, and Nikolas will thank me for it. You bloody werewolf bitch. You escaped me today, but it won't be for long," he said, and I heard the door open. Ania and Lisa walked in, and I knew why he pulled away. They bowed their heads to him, and he walked away quickly.

Ania rushed to me and helped me up. "So sorry, Aliana. He is the worst of the four of them, and he does this all the time. He knows we can't tell Alpha. He is now fixated on you, your case is worse because you have been cut off," she said, and I refused to cry even though tears stung my eyes. My skin crawled, and I wanted to scrub his scent off me.

Understanding what I wanted, Ania told me to return to my room, and they would handle the Queen when she woke up.

I thanked her quickly and hurried back to my room.

I locked my door for the first time.

I went to the bathroom, stripped down my clothes, and stood under the hot shower. I did not know I was crying until a sob escaped my lips.

"We will be okay, Aliana. Nikolas won't let him harm us..." Raven said, and I laughed at my wolf.

"We have been cut off, Raven. Nikolas isn't going to save us from his men," I told her, and she receded.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 13

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Chapter 13 Crossing Boundaries

Aliana's POV

After my encounter with Ingham, leaving my room took much courage. Even when I was with Ania and Lisa, I was always afraid he would come for me.

My encounter with him gave me nightmares, and I would sometimes think of binding myself with silver and jumping out the window just to put an end to it.

Being unable to go outside and do what I liked drove me crazy. How could my life change in a blink of an eye like that? I lived in fear.

I had not seen Nikolas still other than when I peeked at the garden parties.

He was always by himself, looking serious and dangerous, but he never looked at my window, and I knew he never would.

I heard he was serious about being King and taking steps to try.

One criterion was for him to be mated to a Lycan from a good family.

I guess that was why he cut me off. I couldn't say I wished him the best because I did not.

I hoped he suffered like I was suffering, and he and whomever he tried to settle down with had a very bitter and unfulfilled life.

I hated him.

I hated myself for developing feelings for the b*astar*d, and I hated him for ruining me and cutting me off abruptly.

I hoped his heart would hurt like I was hurting, and happiness and peace would flee from him. My sadness had changed to anger, and it was getting worse. It took a lot for me to still care for his mother.

I never knew a day would come when I would not care for anyone, but I felt it in my heart. I had pure hatred and rage towards the Lycans. Being sheltered all my life, I thought all my parents told me of the Lycans were stories, but now I knew better.

They were an evil and vile race, and they deserved every bad thing that would happen to them. All of them except for Ania and Lisa, and that was because they were nice to me. I hated them all.

Months passed, and nothing changed. I had somehow forgotten about Nikolas. My curtain was permanently closed. I no longer peeked at the garden at night, and I no longer thought of him. I had buried my feelings and learned how to deal with Ingham. He would often ruff me up and try to touch me, but I made it so tedious that he stopped. He had bites from me as souvenirs. I got hit and slapped for it, but that was it. I took care of myself and let him know I would rather d*ie than let him screw me.

I told him I would s*li*t my throat to prevent it, and that was when he stopped. I was tired of everything, and I meant it.

One day I had just exited the shower and worn my underwear when some men broke down my door. I gasped and tried to scramble to get some clothes but couldn't.

Gamma Ingham walked in with the Lycan men guarding the door. He grabbed me by my hair and dragged me out.

Once we got outside, they wound a silver chain on my wrist and bound them together then one of the men used the chains to drag me out to the entrance.

Many werewolves were outside, and I could see fear and worry in their eyes. I began to look around for my father. I saw him standing in front with teary eyes. He had aged a bit since I last saw him. I was grateful for the view but sad about the situation.

I was forced to be on my knees in my underwear in front of everyone. I did not know what was happening but knew I would find out soon.

Gamma Ingham pulled my hair so I could look up at him.

"Nikolas isn't here to save you today. I'm in charge b*itc*h." he said and let go. "I do not want to repeat myself," He announced.

"Who murdered the Lycan in the woods?" he asked, and I gasped and looked at my father. He shook his head immediately. We could not link each other because I had silver on.

"I won't ask nicely again," he said, collecting a whip from one of his men. He began to pace about the front.

"We have been kind. We let you keep your home, keep your family members, feed you, and even gave you employment, and how do you repay us? You repay us by k*ill*ing one of our own like a dog in the woods.

I told Alpha that the werewolves of the Forest were treasonous, but he wanted to believe otherwise. You all have proven me right. Before you turn on us and destroy us like you destroyed your former monarch and refused to show Lycans mercy, I would destroy you," He said and landed the whip on my back.

I screamed.

"This is all your fault. Your former Alpha's child would get it because you all chose to act against us Worse things will be done to her if the culprit does not step forward," He said and looked at my father.

"Gabriel, you better bring out the killer, or your daughter will suffer," he said, stepping back and laughing.

“She tried to get you all comfortable, and how did you repay her? You repaid her by committing a crime that would get her into trouble and maybe cost her life,” he said, ticking his tongue, and then he shook his head.

“Who would have thought weres would be wicked to their kind too,” He said, landing another hit on my back.

“Who murdered the Lycan in the woods?” he said, and he was about to land another hit when I heard my father confess to the crime.

I looked at him and shook my head with tears streaming down my cheeks, knowing he did not do it.

“I did it,” he said, stepping forward, and Ingham laughed.

“Nice one, Gabriel, but I know you didn’t do it because your whereabouts have been accounted for,” He said and landed another hit on my back.

“Please stop hurting her,” My father said. “This wasn’t part of the deal,” My father added, and Ingham laughed.

“Murdering a Lycan wasn’t part of the deal either,” Ingham corrected him. “Besides, I do not see Nikolas anywhere here,” He said, laughing at my father.

He was about to land another hit on my bare back when I heard a loud growl, and someone yelled.

“Enough!” I looked to see who it was, and the werewolves parted the way for Beta Qusack to emerge.

“You have overstepped Gamma!” he yelled at Ingham and collected the whip from him. “Who asked you to do this?” he asked him. I could not be at peace yet. “Answer me, Gamma?” He yelled at Ingham, and Ingham could not speak.

“Did you not smell Alpha’s scent on her? Do you not know whom she belongs to? Could you not have carried out your investigation without this display?” He asked, and Ingham bowed his head. I was crying by then. The silver burnt, and the whip stung severely.

Qusack was still scolding Ingham when everywhere went silent and still. We heard a low wolf growl.

It sounded dangerous, and I did not want to look in the direction of where it was coming from. It was approaching, and I was scared. I looked in the direction of the growl, and an eight feet tall grey Lycan wolf approached. It went on all fours and walked towards us, its dark eyes trained on me, and I did not need to guess who it was, I recognised those eyes instantly.

I bowed my head immediately, and when Nikolas's wolf got to us, he hit Ingham so hard he flew off his feet and hit the ground. I feared Ingham might be dead.

Qusack freed my chains and helped me up. Nikolas shifted back, and a man brought him shorts to wear. He faced the crowd.

"Go back to your work. I will launch an investigation to catch the culprit. If you know or saw anything, reach out to Beta Qusack," he said calmly, and the people started leaving quietly.

I looked at my father, and he looked at me. I fixed my eyes on him, not knowing when I would see him again. He did not want to go, but he had to. Nikolas had given an order, and staying would be defying those orders. To my surprise, Nikolas carried me in his arms and took me back into the building.

I wanted to ask him to let me down so I could walk, but I knew I couldn't, and that would be throwing his kindness back in his face.

I wondered why Ingham hated me so much. Refusing to let him f*uc*k me couldn't have been the issue. Whatever his problem was, it ran deep. Nikolas took me back to my room and laid me on my bed. Now that the silver was off, I would heal.

I did not speak a word to him. He had blocked me from the mind link for a purpose, so I held my peace and remained submissive. Nikolas sat by the bed, bowed his head, covering his face with his palm. He was battling something internal, and it was none of my business. I dared not ask. I did not want to be nosey, and I did not want to be sucked back into feeling anything for him.

"How long has this been going on?" he asked me, and I did not know what he meant by it. I did not know what to say.

"Answer me, Aliana?" he said calmly, and I knew I had to speak up.

"How long have you been sleeping with Ingham," he asked me, and I was in shock.

"Never," I blurted out, and he turned to look at me.

"Then why does he have your scent sometimes?" He asked me, and I frowned at him.

"That is because he has been ruffing me up in corners for months, telling me he is waiting until you put me up for general use," I said quickly, glad I could finally report the b*astar*d.

"Why didn't you tell me?" He asked me with concern, but I did not let it fool me.

“How could I? I had been cut off completely, and I could not ask Ania and Lisa to report the Gamma. That would be getting them in trouble. Besides, you told us that we answer the four of you. He reminded me of it, so I felt you would be okay with it and opted to protect myself from him with bites,” I said, and he turned away from me and bowed his head. His hands shook a bit.

“I didn’t cut you off. I have some things I had to deal with,” he said calmly, and I nodded.

“I know. You are planning to get married and be King,” I said quickly, and he turned to look at me. “News flies,” I added quickly, not wanting him to think the maids told me.

“I am not planning on getting married. I am trying to get the kingship and skip that part. It is my right,” he said, and I did not let anything he said sink in. It wasn’t my business, and it wasn’t my problem.

“I did not cut you off, Aliana,” he said, calling my name for the first time, and even though it should warm my heart because it was an improvement from ‘little girl’, I was too numb to feel anything..

“If we had continued, you would have developed feelings for me, which is a rule I do not want you to break. It would be best if you did not break it because we can never be together. That is why I have been distant,” he explained, and I nodded.

“You should have given me an option,” I said, looking at him. “It would have been nice to have some good memories with you before it ends so I will have something to keep me going. It is better than this. I can never settle down or be with anyone. This is it for me. I am not asking you for anything. I am not expecting anything from you, but our few moments together made me forget that I am a werewolf and this is my prison. I won’t fall in love with you, Alpha, because in this world, you are the sky, and I am the earth. We can never meet. I am water, sinking to the bottom, and you are oil always at the top, we can never mix. When you gave me your rules, I listened. Cutting me off wasn’t necessary,” I said without emotions, and he nodded.

“I will deal with Ingham and put everyone in their place. No one would m*ole*st you again,” he said, changing the topic, and I nodded and thanked him.

He got off the bed and exited my room.

I turned to face the window, and even though the curtain covered it, I let it help me escape my thoughts.

I stayed indoors until the next day. I was asked to stay in while Ania and Lisa attended to the Queen. I did not see them until evening, and I was healed from the whip and silver burn by then.

Ania and Lisa entered my room smiling. I wondered what the occasion was but then remembered I had just escaped death at the hands of Ingham. It was something to celebrate.

“Guess what?” Ania said, squealing, and I did not know what to think, I just rolled my eyes and opened the wardrobe to find something to wear.

“Alpha has moved you to his bedroom,” she said, and I looked at her in shock. Was she joking?

Forged In The Flames Chapter 14

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Chapter 14 A Step Forward

Aliana POV

I stared at Ania, completely surprised by her words. I wondered if she was serious or joking. I looked at Lisa, and she nodded. He said we should move your things to his room,” Lisa said, I did not know what to think. “I told you he would come through for us,” Raven said, and I tried to shut her up, but she was too excited.

“It is temporary, Raven. You know he wants to be King. I doubt the other kings would want a werewolf slave queen,” I said, and she growled in my head.

“We are not slaves,” she said, and I did not care. She had issues with reality regarding Nikolas, I didn’t.

“Ingham has been demoted. Alpha learned of what he did, and some of us spoke up about it, even the men that helped us with the Queen.

They all told on him.

Ingham wasn’t expecting everyone would speak up. The b*astar*d thought it would be your word against his, and he thought we would be too scared to speak the truth.

He said you threw yourself on him. You came to him for comfort because the Alpha had cut you off. He said he didn’t want you, but you are good at seduction.

He apologised to the Alpha for t*ouching what was his and promised not to do it again.

He tried to make you look like a liar and that you were trying to create a problem between them Ingham’s lies were believable, but the Alpha did not believe him. He said you could not seduce a h*orn*y man to save your life,” she said, and Lisa began to laugh.

“Yes, he said you were too damn innocent to be able to do all those things and more. Then he asked us, and that was when we dared to speak up. I told him the day it started, and the men said it was true. After we had narrated all the incidents to Alpha, he became furious. He beat the s*hi*t out of Ingham. Qusack and Grant had to stop him. They were all disappointed in Ingham. That was when Grant exposed that Ingham was cast out of his pack because he was a predator. He defiled many young women,” Ania said, and I gasped.

This was Nikola’s fault for building a pack of criminals. I could not say all of them were dangerous, but some, like Ingham, belonged six feet under where they could not hurt anyone again.

“Alpha beat the s*hi*t out of him, and Ingham soon confessed that he did it. He said how you fought and even bit him a couple of times, but then he further angered Alpha by telling him that it shouldn’t mean anything after all, you are just a werewolf. That was what finished him.

Alpha said you were his whether werewolf or not, you belonged to him, and he was to respect what is his as his Alpha and King.

He let him know he broke their mutual trust, and thus, he would no longer have him in the ranks. Delta Grant is the new Gamma now. Although I hate the b*astar*d for branding me, he is a better man than Ingham,” Ania said, and I understood her reasons.

“So, what is going to happen to Ingham?” I asked, and Lisa laughed “He is just a mere pack member. Some say he is too valuable to stay that way for long but only time will tell. As for now, Alpha says you are off limits to everyone,” she said, and Ania opened my cupboard and started packing my clothes. “It is kind of embarrassing for Alpha to say you can’t seduce a h*orn*y man,” Ania said, looking at me. I knew my cheeks coloured in those moments.

“You are still a virgin!” she exclaimed, and I was glad because I had tried to tell them Nikolas and I wasn’t screwing. Now they heard it from the Alpha, and they believed him.

“Tell me why?” she said, and I explained our few encounters, and by the time I was done, I was w*et as hell They did not fare well either. “Goddess, Aliana, that is so hot,” Lisa said, and I giggled a bit, thinking of it. It was hot. “I could see why it got to you that he cut you off,” Ania said, and I sighed. I did not know it was that obvious.

“That obvious?” I asked, and they nodded. “Always gloomy. You leave your room with w*et hair. You even shut your window permanently. We knew it got to you and decided we wouldn’t speak about it so you can heal faster,” she said, and I was grateful that they were considerate of my feelings.

“So here it is, grab onto him next time you find yourself in that situation. Damn the consequence, and just let your b*ody guide you. He will break. He wouldn’t be able to

hold out on you. You give him too much time to recover, you shouldn't. Take what you want from him. Make him give you what you need at that moment. Touch him and grab him. He will lose it," Ania said, and I wondered why she was giving me advice when she confessed she had failed in her time.

I did not want to bring it up, so I do not sound insensitive, but I would try her option if the opportunity presents itself. 'So here is the thing, you still own this room and will only sleep here when the Alpha wants to be alone. He would tell you himself, but you will live in his room," She said, and I nodded. They helped me pack and cleaned me up. Unlike before, they let me wear my clothes. I wore a simple short peach casual bohemian dress. It wasn't anything fancy, but it looked great on me.

They moved me to his room. Nikolas wasn't there, so I was nervous. "What about the tea?" I asked, and Ania shook her head.

"Alpha gave me hell for giving you that thing. I guess he would place you on birth control," She said, and I apologised to her.

They did not want to linger in the room and decided to leave. She promised they would return with food. I was nervous about it.

Nikolas did not return to the room, and when I checked his window that faced the garden, I saw him there with his officers.

They were having the usual evening party. Not much will change, and I had to be careful with my heart. Whatever this was, it wasn't going to be permanent. He might say he does not plan to settle down, but that means he would never commit to me, either.

"Stop being melancholy-phlegmatic about this. We are on a journey. I would choose a sanguine approach if I were you and have the most fun we can because nothing lasts forever, Aliana," Raven said, and I sighed.

Ania and Lisa brought me food to eat, and I did not want to eat alone, but I had to.

He did not return, and I decided to shower in his bathroom. I was afraid but had no choice since I had moved there.

I showered and wore an oversized T-shirt with nothing underneath. I knew it was mischievous, but I was feeling adventurous.

I waited for Ania and Lisa to clear the plates. The maids were all smiles, and I did not know what was so great about sitting alone in Nikolas's room while he partied with Lycan women in the garden. I knew he wasn't touching them and was on his own, but he was there. I closed my eyes to sleep and drifted away.

I woke up to pleasure. Intense pleasure. Nikolas was between my legs, and I could not believe what he was doing to me.

I wanted to close my legs and push him off because I was shy, and this was strange, but the sensation was so damn good that I opened wider.

I felt him dig his fingers into my b*ut*t cheeks and grab onto me. I m*oa*ned louder.

'Let me know if you want me to stop,' he linked me, and I would be crazy to tell him to stop. I ran my finger through his hair.

He s*uc*ked my c*li*t and l*ic*ked it, then l*ic*ked down my s*li*t and stuck his t*ongue into my p*uss*y. I opened wider.

I wanted more. I m*oa*ned, and he f*uc*ked me with his t*ongue, l*ic*ked my s*li*t up to my c*li*t, and continued to l*ic*k and s*uc*k it.

I felt my release coming. I wanted to hold on a little longer to enjoy the sensation because I didn't know when he would do this again. It was too much for me to control and take. A strong tidal wave of my o*rgas*m erupted. I grabbed onto the sheets tightly I felt my b*ody was splitting in two. Nikolas held me in place and continued what he was doing.

Soon I began to shake and turned my head left and right.

My b*ody was moving independently and doing anything it could to handle the sensation.

He stopped and then looked up at me with dark eyes.

I felt my p*uss*y clenching terribly this time. My juices were on his l*ips, and I wanted more. I took Ania's advice and decided to go crazy for once.

I pulled him to me and crashed my l*ips on his. I sat up, and he wrapped his arms around me, kneeling before me.

I could taste myself on his l*ip while we k*issed. The sensation was intense.

He moved from my l*ips to my neck. He s*uc*ked on my sweet spot and then back to my l*ips. I knew my eyes were golden because Raven was now at the forefront. She wanted him badly. She had wanted him from the first day.

His t*ongue explored the insides of my mouth, and I welcomed it.

He tasted me, and I tasted him.

Then I reached for his c*oc*k, he was still wearing his shorts, and he broke the k*iss and looked at me.

“Are you sure about this, Aliana?” he asked, and I nodded.

Taking off my T-shirt, he looked at my b*rea*sts and bent to s*uc*k my n*ipp*les. He k*issed them and s*uc*ked them one at a time while he used his thumb to rub against them.

“You are w*et, Aliana,” he whispered. “You respond to my t*ouch so well,” he said, and all I could do was m*oa*n. I couldn’t see clearly or think at that moment. I just wanted him. I wanted him to seal the deal.

Nikolas laid me down and gazed upon my b*ody. His eyes were completely dark, he traced my b*ody with his finger down to my p*uss*y and stuck his finger in. I wanted his c*oc*k. I wrapped my legs around his waist to position his c*oc*k close to my p*uss*y and ground against him, m*oa*ning.

“You are making it hard for me to hold back,” He said, and I could see he was fighting it.

“Then don’t,” I m*oa*ned, wanting him to finish. He released my legs from his waist and took off his shorts, then placed his c*oc*k at the entrance of my p*uss*y while he stared at me. His eyes remained focused on mine.

“It will hurt a bit,” he said, but I already knew and was prepared for it. I nodded eagerly, and he eased himself in.

He closed his eyes, and I closed mine, then opened them.

He began to push in gently and soon started stretching my walls. I felt slight pain, but it subsided and was replaced with pleasure when he started p*umping in and out.

He did not move fast. He was gentle.

“So tight, Aliana. You are so f*uc*king w*et and tight,” he m*oa*ned, and I could not speak.

Everything was getting to my head. He f*illed me up, t*ouching all the right places and driving me mad.

He picked up his pace, and I felt another o*rgas*m coming. It was moving significantly faster than I could control.

He bent over me to k*iss me while he continued to p*ump. I could not handle it anymore. I came, digging my fingers into his back, trying to handle the rush of the o*rgas*m. Trying to help my b*ody cope with the intense pleasure that I was feeling. I

held on tightly, and he continued to p*ump, increasing his speed. Another o*rgas*m came, and this time, he stilled and shot his c*um into me. He groaned and m*oa*ned and buried his c*oc*k deep inside me, pushing deep as he emptied his load inside.

He laid on me to catch his breath, then rolled off me a few seconds later, and I could not believe what had just happened between us.

He got off the bed and wore his robe. I looked at him nervously, and he smiled at me. "I will run us a hot bath," he said, and I relaxed.

He returned a few minutes later and carried me to the bathroom. He placed me in the bath, and I asked him to join me, which he gladly obliged. I did not know what was happening, but I hoped I would have many moments like this before it ended.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 15

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Chapter 15 Risking It All

Nikolas POV

Sitting in the tub with Aliana in my arms felt so right. It felt more right than anything I had done in my entire life. How could something that felt so right be so wrong?

There was an incredible feeling that came with Aliana. A feeling that I had never felt before. And though I fought it, I knew it would be inevitable. In the past, I had fought myself from embracing my feelings because I knew they would not last. I would have to fulfil my promises to my mother, and I could not place Aliana in that picture.

After the date night that we danced and drank, and she even threw up, I knew I loved her, and I knew my heart wouldn't stop beating the way it did, but I also knew what we had was forbidden and against everything in our world.

After Grant and Ingham confronted me in my office, it made me rethink everything.

I knew the feeling I was developing for Aliana would not disappear, but I could not allow it to thrive, so I cut off and tried to deal with my emotions.

I tried to forget about that night and how she made me feel. I shut her off and stayed away. I told myself that it would go away if I did not see her, but it left nothing but emptiness in my heart, and I was a miserable man.

Within those months, I applied for kingship, and many people suggested it would move faster if I were mated to a Lycan from either the Snow King's family or the Hill King's family, but I felt it was wrong because I was the rightful heir to the forest throne. It was

Gabriel's fault, and knowing I still had a revenge to enact on the traitor made me pull away from Aliana.

My nights were long, and my days were long and cold.

It was hard, and I saw myself and my drive fade away.

Qusack noticed, and he would often urge me to damn the consequences and live in the moment, but I was worried about where my actions would leave Aliana and me when it was time to part ways because it would happen. No matter how much I loved her, I knew we would have to say goodbye someday. The complexity of the situation made me fall back, k*ill*ing me.

I often glanced at her door and imagined what she was doing there. When I entered my mother's room, her scent lingered in the air, and I took it in.

It had been difficult, and Ingham and Grant made it worse by organising the ridiculous garden parties at night.

It used to be something I enjoyed, but I just couldn't relax and participate anymore. I was in knots.

I would catch Aliana peeking from the window, but she did not think I would see her. I could see in the dark, and I would see her rage and disappointment before she moved away. I knew she was feeling what I was feeling. Both of us were suffering.

If only I wasn't a Lycan, and if only her father had not betrayed my father, then this would have worked, but everything was against us, and there was nothing I could do to fix it. It wasn't going to work.

Soon her curtain remained permanently closed, and I believed she had given up and moved on. It was okay because it was a hopeless situation, but I wondered what would have been. I wondered how it would have felt to love her without reserve, even if it was for a day. I wondered so much that I sank into depression.

Soon I noticed Ingham would come to my office with her scent on him, and Qusack knew too. I wanted to confront him, but I believed his explanation would break my heart and make me lose my temper. I did not want to hurt Aliana, so I let it rest.

I believed she had broken a rule, but I was ready to let it go, just like every other rule she had broken and gotten away with.

I focused on the megacity we were building and hoped the response from the Kings would come soon.

Every day I would sit on the chair in my mother's room and read her a story.

I would gaze at her, hoping she would return to her senses and recognise me. If that ever happened, then everything I had suffered and endured, even refusing to love the woman I wanted, would be worth it, but it never happened, and I continued to suffer.

I was mad when Grant linked me to inform me of Ingham's conduct and what he was doing to Aliana.

Qusack tried to stop me from going to the scene by telling me he would handle it because he was closer to the palace, but by then, Bane had taken over, and we were heading back to the palace. I arrived and saw what Ingham had done. I had never been so mad in my life. I had to control myself.

After discussing with Aliana in her room, I realised I would be a fool if I did not give what we had a chance. I had punished myself for too long. The fact that she understood that it would not last and knew what would happen in the future made me want to build memories with her.

If I ever have to let her go, I will never love or t*ouch another till the day I d*ie. I planned to suffer the same way she would I was mad at myself for blocking her off, that was why Ingham could do what he wanted. When my men and the maids narrated everything to me, it took a lot for me not to kill Ingham.

I was also proud of Aliana for not being easy and standing her ground. I always knew her defiance would pay off one day, and it did. Had she been easy, the b*astar*d would have succeeded, and he would have lost his life for it. Her defiance saved his life, and I made sure I let him know it before I demoted him.

Now while in the tub, I pulled Aliana close to my chest and promised myself never to let go.

I was unsure of my resolve until I saw her lying in my bed.

I knew it would be a hard thing to do, and I would have enemies for it. I might never be King, but she was worth it.

I wasn't going to tell her so she does not get afraid. But I planned to separate her from my vengeance and let my heart and wolf be happy for once. I wasn't going to let her go. I was in this for the long haul.

I held her in the tub with this resolve, and my heart rested.

I wanted her to sit in hot water for a bit to avoid getting sore. Some would argue cold water would have been better, but I did not want her to be uncomfortable.

I bent to k*iss her shoulder and then her sweet spot where my mark would rest one day. She m*oa*ned sweetly, and I smiled. She responded so well, I knew it could only come from the heart.

What she felt was genuine, and I wanted to cherish it for the rest of my life.

I intertwined her fingers in mine and brought her hand to my l*ips to k*iss.

“Thank you,” I said, knowing I was her first. She did not say a word, and it was okay. There was no need for words between us. We were giving this thing a shot, and I was secretly giving it my all, I didn’t want to just have memories, I wanted to know what love truly feels like and live it.

We sat in the tub for a while and then returned to bed. I made love to her again.

I knew she would be my addiction, so I was giving in and not punishing myself anymore. I spent the night learning about her b*ody and understanding her pleasure.

I wanted to be enough. I wanted to be her everything.

“What is your wolfs name?” I asked her while we lay in bed, spent from all the lovemaking.

“Raven,” she said, and I repeated the name.

“Raven,” I said and looked at her. “Is she as stubborn as you are?” I asked, and Aliana giggled.

She had a gorgeous smile. I could not believe that I had taken it away for a while. I was glad to see it and that it wasn’t alcohol that made her smile like the last time. It was all me.

“My wolf’s name is Bane,” I told her, knowing she wouldn’t ask me, and she smiled and t*ouched my chest.

I pulled her close, and she placed her head on my chest with her leg over me. “Hold me like that, and I will bury myself in you again,” I teased, and she giggled. I slept peacefully.

I woke up in the morning with Aliana still in my arms.

She was asleep, and I knew I overdid it last night. I linked Ania and Lisa to handle my mother’s care in the morning. I told Qusack to inspect the work being done because I decided I needed a break and wanted to sleep in.

I wanted every minute with Aliana to count because keeping what we have would not be easy, and a time would come when I would have to fight for it. These were peaceful moments, and I wanted to enjoy them.

I did not go back to sleep. I just held her and wondered what our lives would be like from then onward.

I wondered how things would have been between us if there were no laws prohibiting Lycans from mating with werewolves and if her father was not the cause of my family's demise. I wondered what our lives would be if I did not make promises to my mother that I had to keep. I wondered what our lives would be like if I did not have to restore my family's name and honour.

I knew I would never know because that was our reality, but I planned to love her through it all and fight for what I wanted, and she was at the top of my list.

Aliana woke up, and we got ready for the day together. She decided to check on my mother, and I told her to wait for me when it was time for the evening session.

I also planned to surprise her by allowing her to see her father at the weekend. I already knew he was sick and did not have the might to move against me.

I also knew that Aliana cared about me and would not hurt me for the sake of her father and people, so I planned to trust her and allow her to see her father. However, Ania and Lisa must accompany her everywhere she goes.

I went to the office and found everyone there, Qusack, Grant, and my new Delta, Abraham.

I sat on my chair and looked at Grant, daring him to speak and complain about Aliana, but he held his tongue. I guess I showed my intentions with how I treated Ingham.

"So, is she Luna?" Grant asked, trying to be careful, and I knew he wanted the answer.

"Of course, you know the answer to that question, Grant. I care about Aliana, but she can't be Luna," I said, and he nodded. I could not tell anyone my intentions yet. It was my secret.

"Nonetheless, she must be cared for and respected. She will accompany me to places in Forest and parties too. The only times she won't be by my side is when I have to attend to things outside the Forest Territory, and we all know why," I said, and Qusack nodded.

"Won't that create a problem with your request?" Grant asked, and I sighed.

“When that time comes, I will know what to do,” I said, and he nodded. I might not have it figured out, but I planned to take everything a step at a time.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 16

Forged In The Flames

Chapter 16 Just You

Aliana POV

I could not believe what had happened between Nikolas and me.

He was gentle and loving. Everything was confusing.

I knew it wasn't something permanent, but how would my heart recover from this when it finally ended?

Thinking of how he touched me made me want him the more.

The way he held me in the bath, the small talks we had in bed when we were exhausted. It was as if I was with a different person altogether.

His gaze was soft, his tone was gentle, and his smile was genuine.

It wasn't the typical cynical attitude he wore to get under my skin. I was afraid that he was up to something.

What if he suddenly cuts me off again? Thinking about it made me want to throw up.

I knew I would need to be careful and not give him my heart completely.

“Too late for that, Aliana. We gave it to him long before we realised it,” Raven said, always there to point things out, and I stood still in the passage.

Taking a couple of breaths, I braced myself. I did not know what Nikolas would do, but I hoped I would have the heart to bear it. I opened the door to the Queen's room, and she was sleeping.

Ania and Lisa were there, and they smiled at me. Ania's smile was brighter than Lisa's, but it had always been that way, so I did not mind.

“And you finally grace us with your presence,” Ania said, winking at me.

I blushed because all I could think about was my time with Nikolas. How can someone so cruel know how to love? I did not want to lose this side of him. It was like a dream.

All I could think of was how he held me in the tub. I felt protected and loved, but the fact that it was an illusion that would not last made it hurt, and it created a fear I could not handle. "Come on, tell us how it went with the Alpha. You already reek of him, so there is no need to hide it," Ania teased, wanting all the juicy details, but I wasn't going to tell this time around.

I did not want to say or do anything that would affect Nikolas's ambition to be King. The walls have ears, and anyone could be listening.

"He was nice to me," was all I could say. I did not want to go into details because if Nikolas and I had a relationship, it had to be a secret. After all, it was forbidden.

He was trying to become a king. I did not want to be used against him.

"Just nice to you? You two slept in! I heard Alpha has never slept in before," Ania said, and I wondered where she heard that from.

"Who told you that?" I asked, and she laughed.

"The jealous b*itc*hes in this place. You needed to see them during breakfast. For the first time. Alpha did not eat with his officers. It got to them that a werewolf was warming his bed. They had so much to say about it." She said, laughing, and it was sweet to know that Nikolas broke character for my sake. It meant a lot to me.

"Aliana, he might just damn the rules for your sake. I am so excited. He has already done so many things that he shouldn't as a Lycan, and he let you get away with a lot. He even demoted an officer for your sake, Aliana. I do not know about you, but something is there, and I am glad I will be here for it," she said and sat on the couch in the room, crossed her legs, rested her head, and looked in my direction.

Ania motioned me to join her while Lisa sat on another couch facing the one Ania was sitting on. I sat beside Ania and looked at the Queen.

"How was it?" Ania asked me, and I blushed and nodded.

"Did you do what I told you to do?" she asked, and I nodded.

I doubted I needed to do it, but I had to give it to her. Nikolas did confess that I was making it hard for him to hold back.

I enjoyed every moment, and even now, while sitting on the couch, I could not wait to get back to him. I want to take as much as possible before getting cut off from him. I prayed he would remain kind to me.

"Aliana," Lisa said with a serious tone, and I looked at her. Something in her tone said she would wipe away my smile. It was a killjoy feeling.

"I am glad to see that you are smiling again, and you look nice," she said, but I knew she had more to say. I could sense it. "Please do not let it get to your head. Lycan men are horrible. They take you to a height and then let you fall," She said, and Ania tried to caution her but she refused

"I need to prepare her. I do not want to see her get hurt, Ania. She is still a servant. Alpha did not elevate her status, so she has to be careful. She is too innocent for what Alpha will put her through," she said, and I frowned at her. I wondered if she knew something and was keeping it.

"All the girls you see are his, and he screws them. None have slept in his bed, but he screws them. I suspect he will ask you to sleep in your room so he can have another woman. That is why you still have your old room.

They change women like sheets. He favours you, but that is the best you will get from him. He wants to be King, so he will distance himself when the time comes. Please do not get carried away.

They do not have the heart to love, and you do not stand a chance because you are a werewolf." She said with misty eyes.

She spoke from pain, but I wondered whose pain it was because she was a Lycan. Her words had cut deep, but she was telling the truth. I doubt I could handle seeing Nikolas with someone else, but it was bound to happen because what we were doing was prohibited, and he would be King one day.

"Lisa, you didn't have to say it like that," Ania cautioned her, and Lisa wiped away her tears.

"Can't you see the joy in her eyes, Ania? Alpha is having fun, but Aliana is in love. She would be crushed," Lisa said, and Ania turned away.

Somehow Ania knew Lisa was telling the truth. "I am not in a relationship with the Alpha, and whatever is between us is not permanent," I told them, and Lisa looked at me.

"He might have your b*ody and know how to please you, Aliana, do not give him your heart because he will crush it. He is too hateful to feel love, and you are too innocent to understand heartbreak," She said, and I was silent.

With those words, Lisa wiped the smile off my face and put fear in my heart. She had brought me down from the clouds and crashed me on the bare ground.

I spent the rest of the day caring for the Queen and thinking of Lisa's words. When they brought snacks, I could not eat them because I was worried.

I looked at the time and knew Nikolas would soon join us.

I was eager to see him but afraid at the same time. I was glad I did not eat anything or would have thrown up.

Nikolas finally arrived and asked Ania and Lisa to excuse us.

The moment they left, his eyes softened on me. He pulled me to his b*ody and k*issed me. It was spontaneous and unexpected, but I liked it. I returned the k*iss standing on tip toes.

“I can’t wait till we retire to bed,” He linked me while we k*issed. Then he broke the k*iss and looked at me with a frown. “What is the matter with you?” he asked, and I wondered how he could figure out that I was worried.

I shook my head and looked at his mother, who was yet to wake up. We were feeding her three times now, and she went back to sleep after lunch and was yet to wake up.

“Come on, tell me,” he said gently, lifting my chin to look at his face. I did not want to tell him what was happening in my mind because I did not want to scare him.

We were in such a good place. I was floating. I did not want him to withdraw and shut me out again. I did not think I would be able to handle it. I shook my head from fear and felt tears stinging my eyes.

“It is nothing, Alpha,” I said, and he stopped me from looking away and lifted my chin so he could see my eyes.

“When we are alone, you call me by my name,” he said, and my eyes widened with shock. “Tell me what the matter is,” he said, and I tried to pull away.

“If I do, you will be mad and shut me out again. I do not want to be shut out and cut off again. Let me keep this,” I said, and the tears escaped.

“I promise I won’t shut you out or cut you off. Tell me what is happening in your mind. If this thing is going to work, we have to be on the same page, Aliana,” he told me, and I wondered what we had that he thought was working. A secret affair that would crumble when he finally has to ascend the throne was nothing. “Tell me, Aliana..’ he said, and I nodded.

It was better to open up and let him do whatever he wanted than let it eat me inside. “I am a bit possessive and won’t be able to handle it when you invite the other women to your room, but I will deal. I know it comes with it, so I won’t make a fuss about it. I am just trying to prepare my mind,” I said, rushing through the words quickly, afraid I had overstepped and hoping he would ease my heart “I am not saying, you shouldn’t, but I am just trying to psyche myself into handling it because I know it would happen. I am just trying to....” I said, and he stopped me with a k*iss.

He pulled me to his b*ody and k*issed me, then broke the k*iss and let me breathe. I did not know I was shaking until he did what he did. He looked at me and smiled. He looked so handsome whenever he smiled, but it was a rare expression, so I always committed it to memory whenever he did it.

“I do not k*iss women or sleep in with them, Aliana. What I have shared with you should count for something. It is okay to be possessive because I am, but I won’t hurt you.

I might have misgivings about your race and father, but I won’t hurt you. I have separated you from it all.

Do not let anything anyone tells you or does trouble your heart. Tell me immediately if anyone tries to disrespect you or make you feel bad. Am I clear?” He said, and I nodded. His words were reassuring, and I rested knowing he was a man of his word.

We waited for the Queen to wake. I watched Nikolas care for her. He fed her and read her a book. Her feral eyes remained, but she remained calm. I began to pray that one day she would regain her senses to appreciate all her son did for her. Seeing how Nikolas cared for her whenever he was with her made me realise he did all this for her. It was indeed a blessing to be loved.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 17

Forged In The Flames

Chapter 17 What We Do In Private

Nikolas POV

After spending time with Aliana and my mother, I returned to my office. Aliana’s fears were valid, I would never have expected her to feel that deeply.

All the months of being away from her and watching her from a distance. How could she feel for me so strongly? I put myself in her shoes and knew she would be hurt if she saw me with anyone.

I went to the bathroom of my office to catch my breath.

I was nervous about my resolve. What I was doing was prohibited, it would bring unwanted heat to Forest when it got out.

I would have made her mine from the first day, but I fought the attraction because I was yet to make up my mind. I spent all those months going through my thoughts and trying to decide if it was worth it. Now that I had taken this step, there was no going back.

I composed myself and returned to my office. Qusack and Grant joined me. Although Abraham was supposed to be there, I wondered where he was. It wouldn't be a serious meeting, so I let it rest.

"So what did King Fredrick say?" I asked him because he had told me the Snow King had sent a message.

"He said he would like to meet with you in person. He wants you to pick a time to visit him." Qusack said, and I sighed.

"What about my request?" I asked. "It is about your request. He said there are certain criteria you have to fulfil before they can approve your Kingship. He also said he doesn't care that you are the son of the former King. He said you couldn't prove it, and so you must go through the normal process," Qusack said, a bit annoyed.

"That b*astar*d," I said, trying to control my anger.

"If I may speak. I think he is scared that you will outrank him as King. You are the most feared Lycan right now, not him. It would bother him. I think he wants to show dominance," Grant said, and I knew my Gamma was right.

"What about the Lycan hunters troubling my border? Did you send the message to tell the King to order his hunters to stop coming to find slaves in Forest?" I asked Qusack. "I have sent a letter requesting that the Snow hunters desist from entering the woods of Forest without permission from you. I am yet to receive a response," Qusack said, and I nodded. I sensed trouble would come from there, but I was equipped for it.

"I do not think we should anger the Snow King, Alpha," Grant said.

"So, I should let his subjects continue to insult me by entering my forest to hunt without my permission?" I asked him, and he shook his head "King or not, the Snow King has no power in Forest, and thus, his people must seek permission before they cross into my land," I said and looked at Qusack.

"Send a second warning to all of them stating anyone that enters Forest to hunt without a permit will be terminated on sight," I said, and Grant seemed uncomfortable about it. "They are only hunting the werewolves, He said, and I growled.

"They are my subjects too." I corrected him because he was trying to say their lives don't count.

"Do not get me wrong, Alpha. I am with you whatever you choose, but I do not think it is wise to cause a war trying to protect the werewolves," Grant said.

"No, that is not what I am doing, Grant. I am demanding respect," I said, and he understood what I was trying to do. There was a long silence, and then Qusack spoke.

“So, will you honour his invite?” he asked, and I nodded.

“Then it means you will go there when you no longer have Aliana’s scent because you reek of her. Three days away from her will do it,” Qusack said, and I understood his reasons. Fredrick would be looking for reasons to disqualify me. Aliana’s scent on me would give him a reason.

“When that time comes, I will do it,” I told Qusack.

It s*uc*ked that I had to live a pretentious life where Aliana was concerned. Pretending was something I had never done before. It was going to be challenging, but that was the only choice I had when I had two conflicting goals.

I wanted to be King to fulfil my promises to my mother, and I also wanted to be with Aliana and live happily ever after with her. I just hoped everything would not come crashing down.

We talked about lesser things, and I retired.

I was going to sleep early so we could go and inspect the land where I planned to build a structure for my infantry. There can be no kingdom without an army. A month passed, and I was yet to decide whether I wanted to visit King Fredrick or not. Visiting him meant staying away from Aliana for three days and surrounding myself with Lycans. I wasn’t ready for it. I was still getting to know her.

Aliana was still guarded with me, but I did not blame her. I was yet to tell her that I was in permanently.

I could not display affection, so we left everything until we were alone behind closed doors.

I also heard rumours of Lycan women bullying Aliana. But she never told me anything. I asked her a few times, and she said it wasn’t so, so I instructed Lisa and Ania to get the names of the women that were bullying her. They, too, were tight-l*ipped about it, so I did not push anymore.

I would often sit at the garden party alone. Something that used to feel like fun was boring now. I felt lonely because I would rather be with Aliana, but I had to stick to my routine so people won’t figure it out. It was tedious.

I returned from the garden, and just as usual, Aliana was already sleeping.

I was still yet to tell her she could visit her father. I was trying my best not to let it show that I favoured her.

She was seen as someone that warmed my bed, and some people believed I would kick her out of my room when I got tired. It was a battle going through everyday, living a lie. Suddenly I began to wonder if the pretence was worth it.

But I wanted the Kingship. I had promised my mother I would restore our glory, and getting the Kingship was the final step.

If I showed affection for Aliana in public and word got out, then getting the Kingship would be difficult, and the Snow King might want to attack Forest for it.

I wanted to be King first, then make my rules. When I become King, I will not allow the Snow King to oppress me as he is doing to Hill King. He will have no say in my Kingdom, and I believe he knows this, and that is why he is trying to delay the approval.

I went to shower and then joined Aliana in bed. I pulled her close to my b*ody and wondered why our lives were so complex. We were just two people trying to make sense of the mess destiny had dealt us.

“You are back,” She said with a sleepy voice, placing her head on my chest and snuggling into my arms. I held her and stroked her hair gently.

“Yes, I am back,” I replied, and she held me tightly. I moved to see her face, and she opened her eyes.

“You didn’t stare at me from the window tonight,” I said, and she nodded.

“Didn’t want to,” she said.

“Maybe you will join me tomorrow?” I said with an uncertain voice.

“I am okay with just looking through the window. I have no business partying with you down there. They would think you are compromised, and I want you to be King. I know you will be a kind king, and my people will be in safe hands,” She said, and I realised that even Aliana did not see herself as I saw her.

I decided I would make more effort to prove how I felt about her without breaking character. “Ania said some lycans are bullying you,” I asked her.

Ania didn’t say anything, but I wanted to know. I also knew she would tell me the truth so it wouldn’t seem like Ania was lying. I was still ruthless with everyone, so it would have an effect.

“Let us leave it alone. They are just jealous, besides, I don’t want to make a fuss about it,” she said, and I was glad I guessed right.

"I want to know," I said, and she looked at me, then rolled away and sat in bed. I sat up, too, waiting for her to speak.

She looked beautiful with her messy brown hair and honey-coloured eyes. She looked away. "It doesn't matter. I guess they are just mad that you do not call them anymore. They keep telling me my time will expire, and you will kick me out of your room. They said they would make me pay for it once that happened. I never answer them, so it does not get back to you. I do not know why Ania had to tell you. It doesn't bother me. I already know this is temporary, so they aren't saying anything new," she said, and I pulled her into my arms and k*issed her neck. Breathing in her scent, Bane made me l*ic*k her earlobe, and she m*oa*ned. I guess my wolf understood her b*ody better than me.

"I want their names, little wolf," I said, turning her around. I pulled her back to my chest and sat her comfortably between my legs, s*quee*zing her b*rea*st while I s*uc*ked on her neck. She m*oa*ned, and I travelled with my hands to her p*uss*y to feel her.

She never wore panties to bed, and I knew it was deliberate to tease me. "I want their names, Aliana," I whispered while I caressed her c*li*t.

She was so w*et that my index finger easily brushed against the nerve bundle. "I want you to stop telling me it is temporary," I said to her ears while I gave her pleasure.

I felt her b*ody coming apart, and it only drove me wild. I liked waiting for her release before burying my c*oc*k in her.

"Names," I said, edging her closer to her release.

"Nikolas," she m*oa*ned, and I grazed her neck with my teeth. She m*oa*ned sweetly in anticipation. One day I will sink my teeth in, and no one will challenge me for it.

"Names, Aliana," I said.

"Erica," she m*oa*ned, and I continued my actions. "Lacey," She said, and with that, her release came.

I stopped what I was doing and turned her around.

Then, I took off my shorts and had her sit on my c*oc*k.

She obliged and began to ride.

I held her to guide her b*ody. She was w*et and tight, and her walls gripped me so tightly. It felt good, and I did not want to stop.

I switched our positions, placing her on her hands and knees, and began to p*ump from behind.

“Louder,” I said, wanting her to let loose. The party was still downstairs, so I knew the people would hear us.

Aliana’s m*oa*n of pleasure was like music to my ears. It was a song that I never wanted to stop hearing.

She came a few times before I released her.

We laid spent in bed, and I gently stroked her hair while she leaned on my chest. She fell asleep, but I remained awake.

I did not know what to do to the two girls she mentioned, but I would figure something out. I did not miss that I had yet to place her on birth control. As much as my mind was made up, a baby might complicate my plans. So, I would ask the physician to place her on something.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 18

Forged In The Flames

Chapter 18 A Display Of Ownership

Aliana POV

I had a very hectic day caring for the Queen. She was running a fever, and it took a while before the physician could bring her fever down. Nikolas was very worried, and he was a bit cranky too.

I could not blame him. The fear of losing the only parent he had left was intense, and I could relate.

Even though I had not seen my father, and we linked every day, I was always afraid that he would d*ie one day.

My father’s health wasn’t great, but Nikolas had him working with the masons. Even though the hours were more friendly, it was tedious work. I dared not bring it up with him because I noticed he hated my father, but I did not know why.

I had tried to bring it up once, and the way he behaved made me believe that I should tread carefully. I felt powerless because even though he showed me a lot of affection, I was hanging on a thread, too, and he could snap anytime.

Living an uncertain life was hard, but I pushed on for the sake of my father, my people and my wolf. I could not deny that my heart belonged to Nikolas.

He became better when his mother was stable, and he apologised to me for snapping, but I did not take offence. The Queen gave us a scare. I was most afraid because I was the one in charge of coordinating her feeding. I was scared that the doctor would link her fever to me and that Nikolas would think I wanted to harm his mother. Seeing her temperature go down made me happy. I lingered in her room until I was sure she was completely alright.

No matter how much Nikolas showed me affection, I knew it would be nothing compared to what he would do for his mother.

I retired to Nikolas's bedroom while he went to handle pack matters with his beta and Gamma.

Lisa and Ania brought me dinner in his room. I was glad that Nikolas permitted them to keep me company. I somehow knew he would be in the garden, he was always there, but it did not bother me like it used to. I was holding on to his word.

Ania sat on the couch in his room comfortably and smiled.

"Who would have thought attending to you would mean luxury for us?" She said, and I frowned at her.

"What do you mean?" I asked, and Lisa laughed.

"When Alpha assigned us to you, we were mocked. It wasn't normal that Lycans would serve a werewolf, so they saw us as the bottom runt. We were already rejected and condemned, so it was the lowest any Lycan could go," Lisa said, and I felt terrible for them. "Anyway, we have been on top of things since we started attending to you. We enter everywhere, and our work isn't much. Serving you made our lives easier, Aliana," Lisa said.

I did not know why they would see it like that, but to think of it, our lives were indeed easy. We were not washing clothes and scrubbing floors. We eat, attend to the Queen, gossip, and go to bed. That was all we did.

I was too caught up in my pain that I did not see things this way. My only issue was that I was a werewolf attracted to the Lycan Alpha, who would soon be King and dump me. The werewolves were put to work, but they have been earning wages, and the Lycans aren't allowed to discipline them unless they break a law which was the norm when my father led us. He always disciplined wolves that broke the law. I was glad Nikolas was the one that came for Forest and not the Snow or Hill King.

“Have you been put on birth control yet?” Ania asked, and I shook my head. She gasped and beamed at me.

“I do not know what is going on, but Alpha might be courting you,” she said, and Lisa shut her up.

“Stop it, Ania, do not get things into her head. It isn’t good for her heart.” She scolded and looked at me.

“Enjoy it while it lasts, Aliana. Do not get carried away, please,” Lisa pleaded with me, and I nodded. There was no way I could tell the woman that I was already carried away. The ladies spent a while with me, and then they retired.

When they left, I looked out the window facing the garden and saw Nikolas in the gathering. Unlike before, when he was mostly silent and introverted, today, he was laughing with Qusack, and they were having a drink. I wondered what the occasion was. I saw him lift his head to look in my direction, and I quickly moved away from the window. I did not know why I got scared. I guess it was a reflex.

I hit the switch to turn off the light so he wouldn’t see me looking again.

‘Wear something comfortable and join me,’ I heard his voice in my mind, and I was shocked. What was he doing? I thought we were supposed to be private. Having me in his room was different from having me beside him in public. That would make me more than a bedwarmer, it would make me his companion. I did not think it was a bright idea, but I trusted he knew what he was doing.

‘What would you like me to wear?’ I asked, still being careful so I do not overstep. Seeing how I suddenly became compliant when he started being sensitive to my feelings was funny.

‘Your normal clothes would do. I just want you beside me. The moon is full, by the way.’ He said, and I did not notice it until he told me.

‘I will be there,’ I said and went to shower. I showered in a hurry and wore a T-shirt and shorts. The shorts were very s*e*x*y, and it was deliberate. My hair was a bit w*et, but it looked nice. I let it fall, then took a deep breath before stepping out.

I wished Ania and Lisa were with me, I would have felt more confident. I did not know what I would be doing amid Lycans, people that thought they were better than me. The moment I got to the door that led to the garden, my heart began to beat fast. I opened it and walked out.

There was soft music, and the women and men were socialising.

I looked up at the sky, and Nikolas was right, it was indeed a full moon, and it graced the sky beautifully.

Raven enjoyed the sight. It had been a while since I was outside. Besides, I hadn't been out in a long time, apart from when Ingham dragged me out to disgrace and punished me.

"What are you doing here?" I heard a woman say, and I looked away from the moon to look at the person speaking to me. It was Gezel, one of my bullies. She was lycan, and I did not want to say anything that would get me in trouble.

"Your half-breed friends aren't here now, scram," she said, grabbing my hand to push me back. I yanked my hand from her.

"Do not t*ouch me," I said, and she was shocked.

"How dare you speak to your betters like that? Don't you know your place?" Another woman said with a snarl. She was Lacey.

They were angry, and slowly attention was being drawn to us.

I hoped the third won't come. She was the b*itc*hiest of them all. Erica was a no-show, and I was glad.

"Watch it, ladies, do not overstep," A voice said, and I saw Qusack walking towards us. The women smiled at him as if they were not trying to attack me.

"The werewolf shouldn't be here," Gezel said, and Qusack laughed.

"You need to watch your t*ongue, Gazel. Aliana belongs to Alpha, and you aren't as valuable as Ingham," He told her, and I could not help but chuckle quietly. Gazel was still trying to process what he had said, but I understood it. He asked me to follow him, and I obliged. When we got to the table, Nikolas motioned me to sit beside him. I went about and made sure I greeted all his officers respectfully. They all replied, even Grant.

I sat beside Nikolas, and he reached for my hand, which I let fall loosely on my side. He held on to it and caressed it gently with his thumb.

"I did not want you in the bedroom alone. It seemed I was keeping you prisoner," he said, and I did not know what to say, but what he was doing to my hand was amazing.

"Do you want to go on a walk?" he asked, and I looked at him wide-eyed, then averted my gaze so people won't see me as disrespectful. I nodded, and he got up.

He was still holding my hand, so I stood up too

Nikolas led the way, and we walked towards the woods connected to the garden.

It was a safe place. I felt eyes on us as I followed Nikolas, but I did not care. He was the one that made the rules around here, and I was following him.

We got to the woods, and he stopped and bent to look at me.

The moonlight t*ouched his hair and part of his face, and he seemed breathtakingly handsome, but I dared not tell him.

“It’s a full moon, Aliana,” he said, caressing my cheek. His t*ouch was electric, and my mind was in a dirty place already.

“It’s beautiful,” I said, and he smiled and stepped away.

“Take off your clothes,” He said, and I looked back at where we were coming from. I had never done anything spontaneous in public before.

Nikolas began to laugh. “As much as I would love to take you in the eyes of everyone to stake my claim, I am not planning that I just want us to shift and run. It has been months since you let your wolf out. It is only fair you allow Raven to have some fun, and Bane is dying to meet her,” he said with dark eyes. I understood, and suddenly, I was filled with excitement.

I did not know if our wolves would mate, but I wanted to see Raven live upto her fantasies, the very fantasies she filled my head with and mocked me if I could not fulfil them. I took off my clothes and shifted to my wolf. Raven’s fur was beige, and it was soft and easy on the eyes. I looked at my fur under the moonlight, and my fur looked beautiful. Raven howled at the full moon in reverence, and Nikolas laughed, he was yet to shift. I wondered why he hadn’t shifted yet.

“Your wolf is beautiful. Raven is a beauty, and she seems like she would be more fun than you, Aliana,” he linked me. Raven howled in agreement, and I wished I could roll my eyes at them. Nikolas took off his clothes and shifted to Bane. The wolfs size was majestic and beautiful. Bane fell on all fours and urged Raven to lead while he chased her in the woods.

Raven was up for the challenge, and she began to move.

I heard him coming behind me, and adrenaline and desire p*umped in my veins, imagining what he would do to me when he caught me and, at the same time, wanting to beat him at his own game.

I felt like I was free. The breeze brushed through my fur, and the coolness was welcomed. My paws beat the ground, gently communing and reminding it of our existence, and the trees sang through the voice of the light breeze, easing my soul. It

was a beautiful night, and I spent it with someone I liked a lot. We ran until Bane decided to catch Raven, making Raven roll on her back playfully. Bane l*ic*ked her belly, a sensual gesture and a sign of acceptance.

I wonder why Bane was accepting Raven. I wondered what was there to accept. She went back on her paws, and Bane plopped down so their head would meet.

They placed their foreheads against each other, and then Raven plopped down in front of Bane and rested herself between his arms, with him shielding her with his large figure. They both stared at the full moon and howled in reverence. It was indeed a beautiful night. We spent a while there and then headed back into the palace.

I planned on bringing up the issue of birth control when I could.

The moment we entered the room, Nikolas led me to the shower, and we spent time there washing our bodies and making out. It was hot, and I was soaking w*et. The moment we left the bathroom and entered the room, he pinned me against the wall and lifted me while I wrapped my legs around him. I wanted him to take me immediately. S*uc*king the skin on my neck, he drove his c*oc*k into me and began to p*ump.

I knew I was loud, and I did not care. My b*ody needed what he was doing to me, and I received it wholeheartedly.

He finished and transferred our lovemaking to the bed.

I guess I would discuss the birth control with him the next day.

I woke up early the following day, and Nikolas wasn't beside me. He wasn't in the room. I looked at the clock, and it was seven in the morning. I wondered where he had gone. I tried to link him but could not reach him, so I knew he wasn't within range. Only Lycans could connect with pack members further away, werewolves had to be within range. I felt a bit lonely and got up to prepare for the day.

Ania and Lisa joined me around eight, and I was tempted to ask them why Gezel referred to them as Halflings. Still, I opted to ask them about Nikolas instead.

"Do you have an idea where the alpha went?" I asked, and she frowned at me. "He didn't tell you?" She asked, and I shook my head.

"Some Lycan hunters are troubling our borders, they killed two weres that refused to be captured as slaves.

The silver collars on their neck showed they tried to capture them as slaves.

Anyway, Alpha is going to check the place out.” She said, and I was surprised that Lycan hunters had the effrontery to come close to our borders. I wondered why Lycans would be at our borders, but I prayed Nikolas would be safe.

He did not need to check it out since it was werewolves they killed. It showed that deep down, he cared and would make a great Forest King.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 19

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Chapter 19 Problem With Snow

Nikolas POV

Aliana looked peaceful this morning, and I did not want to trouble her sleep. Qusack had linked me to inform me of the werewolves found dead in the woods. I learned they had gone to the woods to pick mushrooms and potatoes.

I wondered why Lycan hunters still thought it was okay to come and hunt for slaves in my woods.

I remembered how my mother and I lived in fear of them, and I realised that what we faced in the woods was the reality of the werewolves.

What King Frederick was allowing his people to do was highly disrespectful. I wasn't sending men to the snow lands to hunt for slaves After all, they had werewolves living in their midst. Why would he think it was okay not to keep his people in check?

I had had enough of this nonsense, and it needed to stop.

There were many half breeds in Forest, and if I did not stop this disrespect, they would soon start hunting the half-breeds too. Werewolves could not detect half-breeds because lycans smelled similar, but Lycans could identify them from their scent. There was always something uncertain about them that made them questionably stand out. I did not want the hunters to come to Forest to eliminate werewolves and half breeds.

My qualms were with the people and the Alphas that sacked my family. I might have issues with the werewolves and not trust them, but this was my land, and they were Aliana's people.

I snuck out of bed and went to freshen up in the bathroom Then I left the room. I linked Ania to tell Aliana where I was off to when she woke.

I also told her to take her to see her father once they were done with my mother.

I did not know how long I would be away from the palace, but I felt it was only fair Aliana got to see some sun.

Staring out the window and gazing at the garden looked cruel. Even though she didn't say it, it seemed like she was in a cage looking out while I always had fun. I planned to find a balance between us. I joined Qusack outside the palace, and we headed towards the woods.

"This is getting too much," Grant said, and I was glad he was beginning to see the issue. "King or not, Forest has a Lycan leader now, they were to liaise with us and get approval before venturing into our woods. King Frederick's silence on the matter is disrespectful. He refused to respond and refused to call his people to order. Maybe he is under the illusion that he has rights over the forest," Grant said, and I growled.

"The only King with rights over the forest is me," I said, and Grant was silent.

If Gabriel did not do what he did, this would not be happening.

My father would have been on the throne, King Frederick would not be disrespectful, the people in the forest would be safe, and I would concentrate on fighting to be with Aliana. Gabriel's treachery caused a chain reaction that spoiled a lot of things. I also wondered how they fared under him as their leader.

"So, how did the werewolves manage this problem when a werewolf led them?" I asked, and Qusack sighed.

"I asked Gabriel, and he said they never ventured into the woods. They had a line they never crossed," Qusack said, and I could not believe that they were content with isolating themselves on the land. No wonder they were underdeveloped. Gabriel and his friends cost the territory a lot, all in the name of seeking power. I wasn't through with him yet.

Whenever I had to do extra when I shouldn't, I would take it out on him. My relationship with Aliana won't change my feelings towards him. We got to the woods and found the corpses on the ground. They were killed like animals with collars around their necks.

I saw the basket of mushrooms the woman was holding, and I wondered why they needed to pick so many mushrooms.

"Why were they picking mushrooms? Don't they have food?" I asked Qusack, and he shrugged.

"All the food is portioned, and they collect groceries every Saturday. They are also allowed to buy and sell in the market. There is a werewolf section where werewolves can sell their produce. Maybe they just wanted to venture into the woods badly," Qusack said, and I picked up the basket to examine its contents. It had potatoes and

mushrooms in them. Things that they should be able to buy in the market. I wondered what they were doing with their wages.

I needed to dig into the matter to ensure they were not planning another uprising because I knew they could not be trusted.

I decided not to trouble myself further and told my men to take care of the corpses. We returned to the palace and headed to my office.

I was furious.

The blatant disregard and disrespect of the Snow King was insulting, and I knew it was time to push back.

I will do to him what he has been doing to me. It will be subtle, but he would get my message.

“Qusack,” I told my beta, and he was attentive. “Get the finest of our men and send them to hunt and catch werewolf slaves in the Snow lands. Make sure they catch them on the King’s turf. At the same proximity,” I said, and I could see worry in Grant’s eyes. “Frederick is not my King, and I am not his subject. If he feels it is okay to hunt for werewolves in Forest without my permission, I will do the same in Snow land without his permission,” I said, and Qusack grinned evilly. He knew what I was trying to do. I was trying to force the King to liaise with me.

“What if he takes offence?” Abraham said, and I shrugged.

“I am offended, and this is my reaction. He is bound to reach out, and I would tell him my issue with his hunters. If they don’t stop hunting on my land, my men will hunt on theirs,” I said, and Grant laughed.

“Honestly, I was beginning to think you cared about those things, but now I understand what you are doing. You want the King to acknowledge and respect you,” Grant said, and I looked at him because I knew what he referred to as those things and why.

“I care about the werewolves. They are my subjects too, and I must protect them. What do you think will happen to Forest if we let them hunt and steal werewolves?” I said, letting him understand the importance of the Werewolf demographic in Forest.

I understood why my father was lenient towards them. They were necessary, but their treacherous behaviour is what I need to watch out for. As much as I cared for Aliana, I had to watch my back where other people were concerned.

We finished the meeting, and I decided to go and check on my mother.

I knew Aliana would have gone with the maids to see her father. It was against my better judgement, but I wanted to make her smile. I went to the room and found Aliana and the maids there. I was surprised to see that she did not go to see her father.

They all stood up immediately, and they bowed their heads to greet me. It hurt and didn't feel right when Aliana greeted me like the others. "No need to bow your head Aliana. You should always look at me," I said, and she looked up gradually.

"Leave us," I ordered, and everyone left, leaving Aliana and me.

I pulled her to my b*ody and k*issed her. I figured she would be mad that I snuck out in the morning, even if she wouldn't give me hell. I owed her an explanation. "I had to deal with hunter issues. I didn't want to trouble your sleep," I said, caressing her cheek with my palm. She closed her eyes to feel my t*ouch, opened them, and looked at me.

"I understand," she said gently, and I k*issed her on her l*ips, pulling her to my b*ody.

We broke the k*iss eventually, and I went to look at my mother.

She was asleep.

Her fever had given all of us a scare, and I knew it had Aliana in knots. Her eyes were misty throughout the ordeal, and she was nervous. I knew she would think that I would blame her. I could never blame her because I knew she would not do anything to hurt my mother. She helped my mother when she did not have to, so I trusted her.

I went to sit on the couch and asked Aliana to sit on my lap.

"I told you to visit your father today. Why didn't you go?" I asked, and she sighed. "I went to his house in the compound, but he was still working with the masons. They said his shift is from nine to five, so I had to leave because you did not permit me to check on him at his place of work," she said, and those were very long hours.

I wondered who made the roster. I did not feel sorry for the hardship Gabriel was enduring. It was nothing compared to what my mother and I had to endure.

"Okay, you can check on him in the evening tomorrow," I said, and she nodded. I knew she wasn't happy about her father's condition, but I wasn't willing to bend or compromise. He was lucky he was getting wages, had a roof over his head and had food to eat. I was lenient.

Aliana swallowed, and I knew she had something important to discuss with me. "Come on, Go ahead," I said, and she looked at me.

“I do not want to break any of your rules. I still remember all of them, but you are yet to place me on birth control. Will it be okay to continue drinking that tea until you decide?” she asked, and I sighed and bowed my head, knowing she was right.

I was so conflicted about everything. I had warned her not to fall in love, yet I had fallen.

I had told her I would not father a half breed b*astar*d, but I was reluctant to place her on birth control.

I did not know what to do.

Seeing the situation I was in with Aliana made me look at my mother. I had promised her that I would wipe out Gabriel’s lineage, but how could I keep that promise when I wanted a life with Aliana? How could I when I planned to fight for us to be together once I become King? How could I when I knew there would be no one else? It seemed that was a promise that I would have to break because I deserved happiness too, and I deserved to share my life with the woman I love.

Aliana remained on my lap while I linked the physician to bring her birth control medication. Even though I wanted a future with her, this was not the time for a baby. I wanted to be King and acquire the power I needed before I could think of fathering a child.

I need to bring my child into a world where it would be okay to be a werewolf and it would be okay to be a halfbreed.

I just needed time and hoped Aliana could trust me enough to hold on. Because no matter how much I loved her, there was a profound sadness and fear in her eyes. I knew it was because, at the back of her mind, she believed what we had was temporary because of our laws.

Forged In The Flames Chapter 20

Forged In The Flames

Chapter 20 A Problem With Food

Aliana POV

I sat on Nikolas’s lap in his mother’s room, waiting for her to wake up I wasn’t happy that day because I realised my father was made to work long hours.

His health wasn’t good, but I dared not bring it up with Nikolas.

I felt like a failure.

I felt like I was betraying my father, but there was just so much I could do in a temporary relationship.

What if I say or request something that would annoy him?

I did not want my people to be worse off than they already were. I was tom.

I cared about Nikolas a lot, but I also knew it would end one day.

Discussing the birth control pill with him was very important because I doubted he would understand if I got pregnant, and I did not want to bring a child that would be rejected into the world.

I was yet to ask Ania and Lisa why they were referred to as halfbreeds. Still, I somehow knew it had much to do with why they were maids and why Lisa always warned me to be cautious. Could it be possible that they were rejected because they were half-werewolves? If that was the case, what quality of life would my child have?

Going on birth control was for the best. Nikolas had bent so much already, I did not want to push it.

If he was going to make any change, it should be because he wanted to and not because I pressured him

The physician entered the queen's room and handed me a packet of pills. He told me when to start taking it and how I should take it. He also warned me not to stop taking it, or it would be ineffective.

Nikolas was there for it, and he did not say anything. I collected the medication, and the doctor left.

There was an awkward silence between us for about five minutes long before Nikolas finally spoke.

"I will figure something out, Aliana. Do not write what we have off." He said, rubbing my back gently, and I smiled at him.

"I am not sad, Nikolas . I am happy that I wouldn't have to resort to drinking that painful tea. Thank you," I said and got off his lap to place the medication in my pocket. His eyes said he did not believe what I was saying, but he let it rest. Honestly, it would have been nice to have a family with him. Ruthless or not, he was a loving and responsible man. He would have been a wonderful husband and father. I took comfort in knowing we would have a good king.

We cared for the queen when she woke up, and as always, he left me to attend to pack matters while I returned to the room.

I slept early that night. I did not bother staying up for him or looking out the window to see what he was doing in the garden. It had become a routine, and I wanted to break it.

I felt him in the night when he came to bed and pulled me close to his b*ody.

He smelled of alcohol, so I knew he must have drunk a lot before coming to bed. I wondered what was bothering him so much that would make him drink that much.

I hoped he was fine and he wasn't depressed. I doubted he would want to share his problems with me, and I dared not ask, so I just prayed for him.

I went to see my father in the evening the following day. Lisa and Ania accompanied me, and I was nervous to see him. I got to his house, and my heart was pounding in my chest just like it did the day before.

I did not know how I would feel seeing and talking to him.

Unlike the mind link, we will be able to communicate genuinely. I trusted Ania and Lisa to keep whatever they heard secret.

I knocked on the door, and my father answered. He opened it and was shocked to see me. "Princess," he said, and tears streamed down my face. He looked tired, and I did not need to know why. They were overworking him, and it was showing.

It was as if Nikolas wanted my father to suffer by all means.

He ushered us in. We hugged the moment I stepped in. I knew I reeked of Nikolas, but I could do nothing. He had marked me with his scent, and we slept in the same bed together. "How have you been?" My father asked me, breaking the hug.

"I have been fine, and you?" I asked him, and he nodded. I frowned at him, and he looked at Ania and Lisa. He already knew them, but I guess he wasn't comfortable still.

"They are my friends, Daddy, they won't tell," I said, and Lisa nodded.

He trusted Ania, but I guess he needed to be sure of Lisa. My father sighed and led me towards his room.

When we got to the room, he asked me to sit, so I sat at the foot of his bed, and he sat beside me. "I am so happy to see you, Aliana. I wondered if I would ever see you again, knowing he keeps you locked up in that place. How is he treating you?" He asked me, and I nodded.

"He is very caring, Father. Almost as if he loves me, but I know it is an illusion. I also know he isn't as bad as we thought he was," I said, and my father nodded.

“But he is hateful, and I wonder why,” my father said, and I sighed. I knew that part of Nikolas too. So I couldn’t argue.

“His mother is feral. I take care of her daily/” I said, and my father gasped.

“His mother is in there with you ?” He asked, and I nodded.

“Yes, Father, she is, and he somehow blames werewolves for her predicament. I take care of her every day. She is docile now since we feed her well, but her senses refuse to return,” I said, and he sighed.

“How can his mother’s condition be our fault? Wolves go feral when they have been cut off from their pack and Alpha for a long time. He just has a need to blame someone for it. Maybe it makes him feel better,” my father said, and I shrugged because Nikolas had never told me what happened. I was also afraid to ask because he is emotional about the things that concern his mother. I did not want things to go back to the way it was. If he cuts me off this time, I will not be able to handle it. My father t*ouched my hand and sighed

“Tell me the truth, Aliana. How are things in that place?” he asked me, and I sighed.

“I swear to you, Father, he treats me well. We even sleep in the same room,” I said, and he was shocked.

“You need to be careful, Aliana. Do not fall in love with him. Lycans never mate with werewolves. Remember what he said when he took you. He said you would have no honour and would never wear his mark. I do not know what he is playing at, but you need to be careful and watch him. Guard your heart Aliana,” He said, and I nodded.

There was no way I could tell him that I was head over heels for Nikolas, and he made my heart beat in a certain way that I could not explain. There was no way that I could tell him that I fantasised about spending the rest of my life with Nikolas and having his children. There was no way I could tell him that I was a fool in love.

I just nodded and smiled “Have you eaten, Father? Should I cook for you?” I asked him, wanting to change the topic and pamper him a bit before I left. He bowed his head and sighed, and I knew something was wrong.

“I do not want you to take what I am about to tell you to heart. I just want you to know what is going on out here,” he said, and I knew what he had to say would be bad.

“The Lycans have been starving us. They cut our wages whenever they like, and we cannot buy or sell in the market. So some of us have resulted in growing our food. I have a vegetable garden at the back, but there is only so much I can grow there. Isreal sold two egg layers last month.

They have been of good support. I have new chicks, and hopefully, they continue to multiply.” He said, and I was appalled by what I heard. “But Werewolves are supposed to be able to buy and sell in the market,” I argued.

“Lycans won’t sell to us, and the place allocated for us in the market is too expensive. We can’t afford the rent. They also cut our wages whenever they like. The free groceries that we are supposed to get are limited. They give the first hundred people, and the rest can go hungry.

The werewolves have been cooperative, and we share the free groceries among ourselves, but life is hard here right now,” He said and bowed his head.

I could not believe they were starving my people, and Nikolas said he would make their lives easier. Was this the easiest he meant? I fed and cared for his mother daily, meanwhile, my father and my people were hungry. This was unfair.

‘Calm down, Aliana, we will find a way to solve this issue,’ Raven said, and I was silent.

“I have cabbage soup if you would like to have some,” My father said, and I shook my head. I did not want to see it because I would break down if I did.

My father and I spent much time together, and soon it was time to return to the palace.

I did not know when Nikolas would let me see him again, but I hoped this wouldn’t be a one-off thing.

We returned to the palace, and I went to Nikolas’s room.

To my surprise, he was there. He sat on the two- sitter sofa, and a table was before him. He looked at me when I entered with a smile, and I returned the smile

I did not want him to ban me from seeing my father again, so I had to behave. “You are in the room early,” I said, noticing this wasn’t his usual time, and he nodded.

“I decided to skip the garden party and spend time with you,” He said, and I took off my clothes and went to the bathroom to shower. I knew it would be only wise to wash off my father’s scent before going close to Nikolas. I returned to the room, and the food was already on the table. I looked at the spread, and I felt like a traitor.

“Come one, we need to eat,” he said eagerly, and I knew he was waiting for me to return before he ate. It was sweet of him.

“I hope your father did not stuff you up with food,” He said, and this was my opportunity to bring it up.

I chuckled.

“How could he? They do not have food to eat. They have to grow and source for their meals. All he had was cabbage soup. I didn’t want to reduce his ration. He needs food to work those many hours,” I said, and Nikolas put down his spoon. His head remained bowed, emitting rage that made me step back.

“Why is your father lying to you?” He asked with a low tone, and I shook my head.

“I think you should investigate it. The werewolves cannot buy or sell, so they must source food independently. The free groceries are given to the first hundred, and that is it. The wages are also cut, reducing their purchasing power. The stalls in the market are too expensive for them to afford. I am not complaining, but I just feel you should know because you said I ate in his house,” I said, and he looked at me.

I knew he was angry and might kick me out of his room that night.

“I will look into it quickly because none of it makes sense. Free groceries are to be given to all the families every Saturday. Werewolves are supposed to be allowed to buy and sell in the market, and I never cut their wages.” He said, defending himself.

He motioned me to move closer to him, and I did it fearfully because he was mad. I sat beside him, and he pulled me close, then buried his nose in my neck.

“Everyone can look at me like that, but not you, Aliana,” he said, pulling me close to his b*ody. “I am only mad because I figured out why the werewolves that got killed were picking mushrooms and digging for potatoes in the woods. I am angry at the people in charge of welfare, not you, Aliana.

You have done nothing wrong,” He said, and tears of relief rolled down my cheek with his words. I did not know I was holding my breath until I exhaled.

He opened the bathrobe I was wearing and caressed my b*rea*st gently. “You can tell me anything, Little Wolf. I am not a monster,” He said, k*issing my shoulder, and I doubted I could eat anything with how my b*ody felt.

He stopped what he was doing and plated my food.

He had made me completely uncomfortable. All I could think about was his t*ouch.

I could not wait for Lisa and Ania to come and clear the dishes so I could get my fix of him. Nikolas surprised me when Ania and Lisa came to gather the dishes.

He instructed them to have the kitchen staff serve dinner and breakfast to the werewolf families in the inner compound, especially my father. Ania looked at me when he said it, and I smiled shyly.

With that one act of kindness, Nikolas chased the clouds away.

He got off the couch and went to bed, but I wasn't done with him yet.

I followed him to bed, w*et and ready to be taken. His eyes showed he knew, and his s*e*xy smirk was my undoing.

I undid his pants to give his c*oc*k the attention it needed with my mouth. Nikolas had been good, and he deserved a reward.