

The Howling Heart's Forgiveness

Chapter 2

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“Brynlee Eclipse, you stand accused of attack my future daughter in law Tanya Cross. For that, you will be demoted to an Omega.” Alpha Valor calls out. My eyes widen and body flinches as I feel my title being ripped from me, my status as a Beta she-wolf being thrown to the wolves as I feel the new title of Omega settle onto me. He literally walked in to me fighting off Scarlet and Ashley, so how could he do this to me.

“Do you have anything to say for yourself?” He continues, his grey eyes stone cold. This was not the Alpha I grew up respecting. Not the man my parents died protecting last year. Many in the crowd watch on with anger, either directed at me or towards the Alpha. It is clear by the way the three she-wolves look versus my dishevelled and wounded state that the Alpha is spouting lies.

“If I tell you the truth, will you even believe me?” I ask sceptically. I try to reach out to Rune, to ask for his support but my mind link to the pack is still blocked and it is clear to me that Alpha Valor is protecting Tanya. Something about this whole situation seems off to me. Like I am trapped in some sort of play.

“Of course.” Alpha Valor agrees readily. I stare at him for a moment, scenting the lie in his words. Whether he believes me or not does not matter, Alpha Valor is against me for some reason and my only hope is whether or not the pack will listen to my words and hopefully come to my defense.

“I did not attack Tanya.” I shot back, glaring at Alpha Valor before my gaze turns to the ever growing crowd of pack mates. I search the crowd for Rune hoping he would come to my defence, even tried to mind link him images of what happened but the block remains. I manage to find him, our eyes meeting for a brief moment before he looks away with guilt. Shocked, I turn back to face Alpha Valor while trying to hide the hurt and disappointment I feel. I know he and Tanya were a couple, but as his Mate he should be protecting and defending me even if it means going against his father.

“I was waking up and getting ready to find Rune when Tanya and her goons attacked me. You can see how badly I am wounded, smell the wolfsbane in the blood that drips from the claw marks they left.” I continue explaining as I look to the wolves in the crowd, pleading with my eyes for them to believe me. Those that sneered at me sniff the air, their eyes widening when they realize I am telling the truth. I can even see some turning to look at Rune as the scent of him all over me is clear as day. Some even muttered that I own my own house so why would I be in the pack house attacking Tanya and her friends this early in the morning.

“Silence!” Tanya snarls as the mummies in the crowd grow louder. Some growl at her, not liking the fact that an outsider is telling them what to do, but Alpha Valor snarls a warning, silencing everyone and drawing a triumphant smirk from Tanya.

“Why would she attack you?” The Alpha asks with a scoff once silence settles. I can tell he does not believe me and I stare at him in disbelief. Could he not scent his son all over me? Heck, I can still feel the aftermath of Rune making love to me well into the night last night.

“Because your son is my Mate.” I deadpan, looking to Rune waiting to see what he would do. His head whips in my direction, his fingers clenching into fists. I stare at him watching to see if he will say anything but instead his eyes turning into a hard glare – a glare that is thrown my way. Taken aback by the cold treatment, I send one last attempt towards the link before I decide to explain further.

“We found out at my birthday party yesterday and he and I spent the day in his room. The pack can smell him on me.” I continue, my own stare hardening as I look away from my Mate wondering why Rune isn’t protecting me.

“You’re lying!” Rune shouts, marching down the steps. The sudden connection of his hand on my cheek sends me flying, the burning pain of being hurt by my Mate causes me to scream in agony. The crowd gasps in horror, my body already weak from the wolfsbane poisoning me mixed with the pain of being attacked by my Mate being too hard to bear in this moment as I try to force my healing into overdrive. I can’t appear weak right now.

The pain subsides as soon as I focus on healing and I turn to face my so called Mate just in time to watch two wolves rush forward to restrain him for hurting me further. But Rune is frozen as the mark of a Mate Beater appears on his neck, causing him to scream like a bloody banshee while everyone watches in a mix of shock and horror. It is clear now that I am telling the truth.

The Alpha looks between his son and I, worry for Rune etched into his grey eyes, but he chooses to remain where he stands. As an Alpha dealing with a pack member accused of attacking a visitor, Alpha Valor can’t afford to help his son through a crisis he caused all on his own.

“By the mark that just appeared on your neck Rune, I would say you are the liar. I am disappointed in you.” Alpha Valor states, giving his son a look of pity before he turns back to glare at me. Taken aback by the hostility in his eyes, I stand to my feet and ready myself for a fight all my instincts are telling me is coming.

“Unfortunately Brynlee, Rune and Tanya were arranged to be married years ago.” He continues, his grey eyes so cold and uncaring that I suppress a shiver.

“You cannot be with my son as I made a deal with Alpha Jonnah Cross. Our packs will be united in marriage. We made this deal so that he would not attack us for our land.” Shocked by this revelation, the pack begins to whisper amongst themselves again. My mind replays the night I just had with Rune. How I gave myself to him thinking we would be together as intended and we

would lead Pine Moon together one day. He promised me so much last night, so how could he have kept this from me.

“What do you mean I can’t be with my mate? He is the only one the Goddess paired me with, I won’t have another mate?!” I question, my voice raising until I am screaming at Alpha Valor. I knew my instincts were right in that something was off. Both he and his son knew I would never be able to be mated to Rune and they planned this whole farce with Tanya.

“You heard me. Now either reject my son or let him reject you.” The Alpha scoffs, glaring at me like I am a misbehaving pup. Shaking with rage at his words, I turn to face Rune who stares at me with his own seething rage. The mark of a Mate Beater will never leave his skin. He will be stuck with it for life unless he repents for his mistake.

“No.” I snap back. I will not reject my Mate.

“Then Rune will do it for the good of the pack.” Alpha Valor shrugs, stepping back and motioning to his son.

“Rune wouldn’t do that! He knows we are meant to be together!” I argue back, turning to face Rune. He stares at me for a moment, his anger subsiding as he takes in my pleading gaze, but guilt flashes as he shakes off the two Warriors holding him back and opens his mouth.

“I, Rune Sterling, reject you, Brynlee Eclipse, as my Mate. May the Goddess find mercy on you and you find a wolf to spend your days with.” The pain rips through me like a blade heated in Hell’s fire. It tears at my heart, causing an ear piercing scream to wrench from my throat as I fall to my knees. My one and only Mate choose a pack whore over me. Chose his duty over me.

The pack watches on, some in horror, some in shock, and others with amusement. After what feels like eternity, the pain subsides and I look to find that Rune stares at me with a smirk, one that causes the rage to take control. Without thinking I lunge at my now Ex-Mate, my fingers turning into claws as I slash them along his face. He screams in pain, his warm blood coating my fingers. He knew he was engaged to Tanya for years. Knew that he and I could never be together and yet he still took my virginity last night. Still played me like a fool and made me believe we could have a future as Alpha and Luna.

Strong arms pull me off of Rune and I allow them as I recognize the scent of Gale – the man who was made my God Father the moment I was born.

“Brynlee, you need to calm down.” Gale whispers into my ear, holding me tight against him as I try to fight my way out of his grasp. But he is strong, whispering that Rune will get his karma and that I need to calm down so that my healing can work the wolfsbane from my system. I finally stop fighting and allow Gale to help me stay upright while I fight back the tears that threaten to spill from the pain coursing through my heart.

“Brynlee you went too far!” Alpha Valor screams as he steps towards me. The two wolves that held Rune back now grab onto the Alpha, preventing him from attacking me unjustly considering

what his son has just done. I glare at him, not caring any more about respecting him as my Alpha. He took away my status as Beta knowing it was the last thing I had left of my parents after their death a year ago. Made me and Omega without hearing my side of the story, then told me I can't be with my Mate and had Rune reject me. He can go to Hell for all I care. I will even send him there myself if he tries to take another step towards me.

"No. You and your son went to far." I snap back with a snarl, feeling my power of a Beta trying to break through the constraints the Omega title has placed on it.

"My parents gave their lives for you and your son and this is how you treat me? I deserve better and you know it!" I scream back, the pack whispering their disapproval at the father and son pair. Gale tenses behind me, reminding me to stay calm but I can't. Alpha Valor took everything from me.

"It's exactly because of what your parents did that I am allowing this." He snaps back, spit flying from his mouth as he seethes with rage.

"Brynlee Eclipse, you are henceforth no longer a member of the Pine Moon pack. You have until midnight tonight to pack your things and leave my pack or else you will be hunted and killed as a Rogue." I feel the pack bond break, feel my heart stop beating for a moment from all the pain I have faced in the last thirty minutes. The status of Omega is ripped from me, its shackles that bound my Beta blood gone and I take a deep breath. To think in just thirty minutes I would go from Beta, to Omega, and back to a Beta again. All it took was for me to become a Rogue.

"Valor this is going too far!" Gale shouts back.

"No Gale, this is exactly what needs to be done!" Alpha Valor screams back, his glare turning from me to Gale.

"And if you think I went too far in banishing Brynlee, then you can leave with her." He adds. Gale opens his mouth to say something but someone else speaks first.

"Fine. We will leave then as clearly Pine Moon is made of liars and snakes." I turn to the sound of the new voice and find Miss Asteria walking towards us. Her image is blurry as the pain from the rejection and the banishment course through me.

"Gale take Brynlee home while I deal with this younger brother of mine." Miss Asteria orders. I move to protest, to stop her from breaking ties with her family, but my steps falter and I begin to fall. Arms catch me before I hit the ground and Gale's scent surrounds me once more.

"Hang in there Brynlee." He coos, helping me to stand.

"You can't cut ties because of me." I mumble out, feeling my body sway again.

"If Asteria says we are leaving, we are leaving." Gale mutters as he scoops me into his arms. I try to fight him, try to push myself away but the pain and the wolfsbane have finally taken their

toll on me and as I try to fight to stay awake, darkness takes me and I pass out while Miss Asteria argues with Alpha Valor.