

## Chapter 80

Avalynn Day dreaming about the last few weeks...

I sat on our terrace, sipping my morning coffee. Everything was calm and quiet. No one had heard from Dexter but we knew it was because he was in hiding. He was obviously being shielded by the witches council, there was no doubt about it. I took another sip of my coffee and watched as the sun rose slowly. Beautiful colors of oranges, yellows, and pinks kissed the dark blue sky. Fluffy clouds drifted above my head, with a cool breeze kissing my skin. I focused and thought about the last few weeks and how life has changed since everything has happened.

The last few weeks we have been focused on training and getting the boys acclimated and Matthew training with the rest of the warriors. For a rogue wolf, he seemed to fit in well. He was strong and we were able to find out he was one of the strongest upcoming warriors out of his pack in school. He was quick and very smart. He quickly picked up on our drills and exercises with ease, and what was more shocking was that he was able to keep up with anything and everything that was thrown his way. Something was different about him, I just couldn't place it.

I trained with everyone and worked on powering up my abilities with a select few. We were getting ready to host a dinner tonight with every Alpha in the territory and every strong-abled, high-ranking Lycan from our territory here for the next week. We would be going south soon and really needed to get everyone on the same page. It was going to be a packed house.

The boys were fitting in just fine and their uncle had left and gone back to his pack. I had heard, through the grapevine, that the minute he arrived at his pack he found a second chance mate. I was happy because honestly I still felt guilty for doing what I had done to Bridget, even if she deserved it. The boys loved to follow me around and watch my every move. I liked that they enjoyed being my shadows. They loved coming to training and attempted to do a lot of the moves we were all doing. It was cute and sweet. They have completely stolen my heart.

All three of the boys had their own rooms in our wing of the castle. Once Daniel had left, we moved their rooms to a permanent location and much closer to us. I decorated all the boys' room with what they were into, with the help of Trevor. He didn't care about decorating, but he enjoyed shopping for all the things. He really enjoyed getting everything he needed or wanted to make his room, truly his room. Even with everything being all decked out, the boys were uneasy staying in their own room.

I understood where they were coming from and put up rolling beds in Trevors' room. It took about a week and a half for them to all be comfortable in their own rooms. They all slept in the same room up until yesterday. After they have been here these last few weeks, I honestly couldn't see my life without them. Especially when I watch the way Everest is with them, he was truly a wonderful father figure. We are a weird blended family, I guess. Lycan's and wolves. It's funny when you stop to think about it. Normal Lycans and wolves do not get along, we are better at it because, well I grew up with wolves and we are both royals.

I never heard the sliding door open up as Everest stepped outside. My mind was bouncing around from one detail to another as flashes of images from Matthews' mind appeared in my own. I closed my eyes as I was trying to pinpoint where he was. I, at that very moment, wished that I knew how to draw. Unfortunately, I was not blessed with this talent and so I was sure that trying to attempt it would be a major failure.

When Everest cleared his throat, I nearly threw my coffee up in the air. "Oh, good morning." I smiled up at him.

"Good morning, my love. What are you out here doing out here this early all alone?" He questioned.

"Just enjoying the quiet before the storm." I looked back out into the dark wooded area.

"Oh, what storm?" He pulled a chair away from the table and sat down next to me.

"The boys will be waking up soon. I am trying to get into some type of routine with everything going on. It is an adjustment, a happy one, but still an adjustment." I leaned my head back against the wall.

"We will get the hang of everything, just give it time." He leaned over and kissed me on the cheek, causing a smile to slowly make its way onto my face.

"I love you." I happily sighed.

"I love you," he replied.

Later in the day...

I stood with my hands on my hips breathing heavily. The workout and training had kicked my ass. Even though I was exhausted, the workout felt great! We had been working out and training hard nonstop for two hours. Now my muscles screamed for relief. I looked over at my mate who was walking around without his shirt on. I bit my bottom lip as I watched his muscles twitch and move under his skin. He looked absolutely delectable. My tongue darted out and wet my lips as I thought about all the things I wanted to do to him.

"My Queen. Are you ready to go to the gym and work on your abilities?" I wasn't paying her any attention and still watching my half-naked mate move around and in between warriors, helping them improve. "Hello? Ohhh, I see."

"What? Oh. Hi. Sorry, I was a bit distracted." I laughed.

"Oh no worries! I was just wondering if you were ready to go inside and into the gym to work on your specials?" Jamie asked me.

"Of course. Let's stop and grab a couple of waters on the way?" I walked off with her and we went inside.

We picked up our water and walked into the gym. Everything seemed to be normal and I had improved in the ability to search the mind down to just a few seconds. We worked for about another hour before calling it quits. When we walked out of the gym, I was nearly tackled by Bryan and Taylor as Trevor laughed. I let out a laugh and hugged them all.

"We are here to take you to eat snacks with us!" Taylor was holding my hand tightly in his own. For someone so small, he sure had a tight grip on me.

"Snacks? I love snacks! What kind of snacks did you all have in mind?" I looked among the three of them.

"Banana!" Taylor shouted.

"I was thinking a fruit salad and maybe some nuts?" Bryan shrugged.

"I thought potato chips?" Trevor was scratching his head.

"Well, they all sound delicious, however, I think Bryans is more filling and should hold us over until we have dinner tonight. Dinner is to be later than normal as we have a few visitors arriving soon." We walked down the hall and into the kitchen.

I asked the chef to make each of us a fruit salad bowl with a side of mixed nuts and cheese. We sat at the bar, on stools, talking and laughing together. Taylor, who was the youngest, slid off of his stool and made his way over to me, dragging his stool closer to me. I watched him bravely climb the stool and sit down carefully.

"I just wanted to be closer." He smiled at me.

"Be as close as you would like. That goes for you two, too." I smiled at Bryan and Trevor, who nodded their heads, acknowledging me. I leaned over and slowly scooted Taylor's stool closer to me. We ate our snacks together and made our way back to our wing of the castle.

The boys all went to get cleaned up and I did the same. Guests would be arriving shortly and we would all need to be ready to receive them together. I am sure everyone would be wondering about them all but they would all understand. It is my duty after all to ensure the well being of this family, who have quickly become apart of my family.

I dressed in a flowy, knee-length, forest green dress. It was a modest v-neck and had ruffled sleeves. I put on a light, natural looking make-up, earrings, and a necklace Everest had purchased for me. I was sitting in the chair, getting ready to put my heels on when Everest walked into the room.

He stopped in his tracks as his eyes moved along my body. "Wow, you are stunning! Absolutely breathtakingly beautiful!"

"Thank you!" I smiled and slid my heels on. "I am going to check on the boys." I walked for the door.

"No need, they are downstairs and ready to go." Everest yelled from our large closet.

"Oh, okay. I will wait for you then." I sat back down and played a game on my phone, waiting for him to finish getting ready. About twenty-five minutes later, he was walking out in black slacks and a soft blue button-down shirt. He had a dinner coat in his hand, but as of now from his hot shower and rushing to get ready, he was a little warm and decided on carrying it down the steps.

We reached downstairs, my hand in the crook of his arm, and the boys were sitting and talking quietly amongst themselves.

"Okay fellas, ready to go greet our guests with us?" Everest asked them.

"We get to come greet important people?" Bryan's eyes lit up with excitement.

"Really? We get to come?" Taylor softly spoke.

"Of course you get to come greet people with us." I smiled at them. "It will be Everest, Trevor, then myself and you and Bryan in front of us." I kneeled down to them and took both of their little hands in my own. "Is that okay?"

"It's okay with me!" Taylor smiled at me.

"Yeah, same. I would like to meet people too." Bryan nodded his head as his hand squeezed my own.

When I stood, they stood with me. They held a tight grip on my hands and I held theirs. The three of us followed behind Trevor and Everest as they chatted with one another. We walked down the steps outside and waited for our first guests to arrive. We were only waiting for a few moments when the first SUV rolled into view. We introduced the boys to every person that arrived as our adopted sons. When Everest said it to the first guest, Trevor's head seemed to be on a swivel between us. He contained it until they walked away and he was about to burst into a million pieces from excitement.

"Really? You are adopting us?" Trevor had a smile on his face.

"Well, I wanted to talk to you about it. See if it is okay or something that you would want to do?" I told him and glanced at Everest, who had completely let it slip.

"Of course! I love you guys. You have done so much for me. You helped save my life. Missing an arm swapped with a robotic arm, you are both my heroes." Trevor moved to hug me and then Everest.

I felt tears trying to break free. I was someone's hero. Me, I never thought something like that would happen. My heart swelled with pride at those little words.

"You are my hero Trev." Bryan told Trevor, as Taylor agreed with him.

"Yeah you basically saved us from the bad guys," Taylor commented.

I was suddenly taken back to that day when I found them wandering in the street, debris all around them. Their clothes were dirty and torn in so many places. I couldn't believe these two young children survived such a m\*\*\*\*\*e. It was all thanks to their older brother. I thanked the Moon Goddess for bringing these sweet-loving boys into my life. Now that they were here, I truly didn't know what I would do without them now.

Finally, the last guest arrived and we all walked inside and made our way to the dining hall. The night was filled with heated discussion about our options. Some were ready to storm the witches' council blindly, others were obviously hesitant. Some even wanted to sit by and wait to see if anything would happen. I wasn't opposed to this idea, it would give us more time to prepare and just live our lives. We had no clue other than somewhere near the mountains. That is if he hasn't moved on and now that the witches' council knows that we know, they could back off.

Then again, they could bring down hell upon us, if they wanted. Then again, why haven't they done this already? Especially if they were all so very powerful, it didn't make much sense to me. Were they playing with us? Watching us from a distance?

Infiltrating and disguising themselves as one of our own?

"I don't think they're doing anything like that. We would be able to tell." Charlotte snickered.

Oh, yeah. That is true. How did I just forget I could go into other's minds? I rolled my eyes at myself.

"Sometimes I think that it's a good thing we are pretty." Charlotte hollered and was doubled over laughing.

"Shut. Up. I am tired." I frowned.

"That is no excuse, you were just creeping into every person's mind that you just met. Some things I could have done without knowing. Yuck." I couldn't help but to agree with her.

Trevor, Bryan, Taylor, and myself were walking down the hallway after dinner, making our way up to the boys' room when I happened to stumble upon two hushed voices.

"Adoptive sons? They chose to adopt some pitiful orphaned wolves? How pathetic." A man said.

"Peter, stop. You know the story of how she found them. It was sweet, I would have wanted to do the same." She sighed.

"Yeah, like I would never let that happen. Everest seems weak. Let his mate do whatever she wants to do. Doesn't keep a tight leash on her. Probably why we are at war." Peter scoffed.

"I can't believe you. You are impossible. Do you not believe the story about how they met?" She questioned him.

"Please, Ruth, don't be so absurd.." I walked around the corner at that moment, the boys behind me. They both seemed to freeze in the spot I found them in. Peter seemed pale as he looked at me.

I let out a growl and took another step towards him. "Speak ill-willed of my boys again and I will rip out your tongue."

He nodded his head. "Yes, My Queen."

I bent down to his ear to whisper, "Careful how you speak about me or your King. Treason is a funny thing. I will take your head for it in the future. No questions asked, no warning. Well, other than this one." I stood up straight and smiled over to the trembling woman.

"Is he your mate?" My head tilted, looking for a mark and not finding one.

"Yes, My Queen," She replied quickly.

"You have yet to mark one another?" I frowned.

"No, we haven't been mates very long, about two weeks." She was slowly calming down.

"Oh I see. We waited and it was a bad idea. Anyway, Ruth, between you and I, I would think long and hard about whether this is who you want to be tied to for forever. Seems like trouble to me. Of course, I could be wrong. Am I wrong Peter?" I glanced over to him, his fists were balled at his side.

"I.. I.. Well, I don't think I am trouble?" He stuttered.

"Treat her better. Do better. Make better choices. Watch your words because you never know who is listening. You both have a wonderful evening. Okay guys, let's get you up to your rooms." I turned to look at the kids before walking away and upstairs as they followed right behind me.

"She told them!" Bryan commented once we were up the stairs, causing a smile to cross my face. I knew at that very moment that I would protect these children from anyone and everything if I could and was capable of doing so. I would gladly lay my life on the line if it meant that they could live.

"That's called being a mother and a great parent," Charlotte commented, and I nodded my head in agreement. She was right, it was.