

CHAPTER 99

CHAPTER 99 To All of You

In the sterile confines of the pack hospital, Matthew lay motionless on the bed, his once vibrant form now pale and frail. Kelly was inconsolable, her anguished sobs filling the room as she clung to her dying son's hand. The scent of despair and grief hung heavy in the air, a suffocating reminder of the tragedy that had unfolded.

Jack stood by the bedside, his fists clenched in impotent rage. His eyes bore into Ethan demanding answers. "How could this happen? How could someone kill a werewolf's wolf without an Elder's involvement?"

Ethan's expression mirrored the gravity of the situation as he explained, "It should be impossible, Alpha Jack. No one but the Elders should possess the knowledge or the power to do this."

"Then, Elder Richard did this!" Kelly said hysterically.

"No, that is impossible. All the Elders are accounted for. Elder Richard would not have been able to do this. Whoever did this must have been taught how to do this," Ethan explained.

Kelly continued to sob and Jack led Kelly out of the room. Garrett followed behind them with Ethan. Garrett fought to keep his own emotions in check. He was conflicted. Garrett was distraught that his brother was dying, but the scent of Lily's blood on Matthew had nearly driven him to the brink of losing control.

'He deserves this for what he did to Lily,' Garrett growled. 'So much blood is on his hands. He deserves to suffer like this.'

'Perhaps, but we don't know what happened. My brother is dead and yours is

dying. We can set aside our grudge for now. Anger is not what we need right now,' Berric responded.

Berric didn't even realize that Baldur was gone. It hurt him that he didn't even feel it. Berric and Baldur never had any bad blood even when Matthew and Garrett were fighting him. Berric felt immense loss for his brother. He didn't deserve this.

As the tension in the room lessened as Bethany only remained, Matthew's eyes fluttered open, his vision hazy. Bethany was who he saw, sitting by his bedside, looking out the window. A weak smile tugged at his lips. "Bethany, why are you looking so sad?"

Bethany whipped around. Her eyes were filled with tears of relief as she reached for her brother's hand. "You big idiot. What did you go and get yourself into now?"

"You know, same ol, same ol," Matthew joked.

"Matthew, you have no idea how worried we were. We thought we'd lost you," Bethany answered.

"You're still going to," Matthew said gravely.

"Don't say things like that. You're going to recover. We just need to get your strength up," Bethany explained.

"Bethany," Matthew's voice was strained. "We... we need to bring everyone in. There's something I have to say... while I can still speak."

Bethany nodded, her heart heavy with concern. She quickly left the room to gather the family. Kelly rushed to Matthew's side, sobbing, "I am so sorry. Please forgive me."

"There is nothing for you to be sorry for Mom. You didn't cause this," Matthew said with a small smile. Soon, the room was filled with anxious faces, each person eager to hear Matthew's words.

"You don't need to talk. You need to save your strength," Kelly said wiping the tears from her face, trying to put on a composed expression for her son.

Matthew mustered the strength to continue to speak, his voice barely a whisper.

"No, I need to say this. I need to apologize... to all of you, but especially to Garrett."

Garrett, his eyes red-rimmed from tears and anger, regarded Matthew with a mix of emotions. "Matthew." Garrett swallowed down his anger for Matthew before saying, "You don't need to apologize for anything. We need to focus on getting you better."

But Matthew persisted, his words carrying the weight of remorse. "No, Garrett, I must. What I did... it was inexcusable. You didn't deserve anything that I did to you."

"No, Matthew. Garrett doesn't..."

"He does, Bethany. Just shut up and listen for once," Matthew interrupted her.

He went into a coughing fit. Bethany quickly offered him water. Matthew took sips from the straw. He fell back on his pillow and took a moment to compose himself.

"I am sorry Garrett. I know better now," Matthew finally said.

Garrett finally nodded and said, "All's forgiven."

Kelly, her grief momentarily set aside finally asked, "How did you end up in the woods? Who did this to you?"

"It was Kenneth. He injected something into me and I felt Baldur fading away," Matthew explained.

Anger rippled through the room. Ethan snarled in anger. This meant that Elder Richard taught Kenneth how to do this. What else did that disgrace of an Elder show Kenneth? "I will take care of Elder Richard," Ethan growled, turning to leave.

"I will come with you," Jack said right after gripping Matthew's shoulder in support. "He and Kenneth will pay for this. No one harms our family and gets away with it.

"Why would he do this? He did everything for you to reclaim Lily," Garrett asked in confusion.

"He wanted to remove my mate bond. I should have listened. I should have accepted her rejection and this wouldn't have happened," Matthew answered.

"We need to rescue Lily."

"Are you really worrying about her?" Bethany balked. "You need to worry about recovering."

"Lily was offered up to the Hunters and they brought her back to the Blue Creek packhouse before this happened to me. I don't know what he has planned, but you can't allow the Hunters to get her back. You have to go get her as soon possible," Matthew continued.

Bethany paled. So everything was true. Matthew was involved. She backed away, unable to deal with the mixture of emotions that she was feeling.

"I am so sorry for everything. I know I fucked up, but I hope by telling you this I can't make this right," Matthew said before slipping back into unconsciousness.