

## Chapter 127

ŴŴ(ω).NôvêlworM.c@©

ARTEMISIA

Cayden growls, increasing his pace as he drags me through the hallways and back to our room.  
"Don't tell me this here, babe. I'm still fighting not to rip his fucking head off for locking you away when you felt sick."

I halt in my tracks, making my entire entourage gasp as they risk running into us. Laying a hand on his cheek, I smile at him. "It's all good. I'm safe now, right? Also, would you please stop running?"

"Sorry," he grumbles, leaning into my touch. "I'm just a bit anxious."

Getting onto my tippy toes, I kiss his lips gently, and we start walking again. I really wanted to comfort him, but I also know that the walls have eyes and such little gestures are important for the judges to see to make us win our case.

They need to see that I'm feeling safe around them.

"It's okay, my love." I smile, taking his hand to start walking again.

As soon as we have entered the wing, he doesn't stop in any of the sitting rooms but drags me into our bedroom, closing the door right into Fynn's face.

"Why didn't you tell me?" He asks as he turns around, looking angry.

I sit down on the bed, laying my hands on my lap to keep myself from gesturing nervously. "I didn't think it was of any importance."

"Poisoned or not. They kept locking you into the attic. And what? Starved you? Did they beat you?" I gulp as he avoids my gaze, his face distorting.

"Cayden, please," I start but he scoffs, making my heart twist painfully.

"No! You kept that from us even though we were looking for a defence strategy. What the fuck, Missy? How could you not tell us?" He asks, clenching his jaw as his angered gaze finally meets mine.

I take a deep breath, shaking my head. "I know that it pains you, but I can assure you that apart from the few times I was put in time out into the attic, I was never abused, and never starved. My family was always loving to me, and it was a hard time for them too, so that was their way to cope with it."

"I can't believe this," he murmurs, starting pacing aroundŴŴ.NôvêlworM.c@©

"Cayden, the attic wasn't some dungeon. It was a cosy small sitting room where I would spend a few hours sulking while reading. It's not exactly the torture you would imagine. I was acting strangely after the rejection. My heart was broken and they kept doing business with him instead of siding with me. So, I did a lot of stupid things after I got back from uni." Sighing deeply, I let my shoulders slump. "Would you please stop pacing around, and look at me?"

Cayden stops in his tracks and looks at me with clenched teeth. "Is there something else you have to tell me?"

"Maybe... But you have to promise me to stay calm!" I say, my heart beating increasingly fast in my chest.

He groans, pinching the bridge of his nose before he takes a deep breath. Walking to me, he gets onto his knees, taking my hands into his. "I can't promise you. I can't, Missy. There is so much at stake. How can you ask me to stay calm?!"

"I didn't think those things would help us! It was just my family trying to cope with a difficult situation. I can't act like an asshole, just like they are right now, and blow up stories more dramatically than they actually were," I explain to him, making him exhale.

"What is it?" he asks, making me bite my lip.

"After I fell for his foul play and slept with him, I didn't tell anyone about it. Just Ramona. But I had the impression that Giorgio knows about it. And he is not the only one because my father came to me a few days after it had happened and asked me to be nicer to Rick."

Cayden squints his eyes at me. "I beg your fucking pardon?"

I sigh, raising my gaze shortly before setting it back on him. "Rick kept messaging me after we... well..., he flooded me with texts and calls about wanting to meet again. I kept insulting him after I had already tried to say no nicely, and as he didn't listen even to the insults, I blocked him. So, my father actually came to me to tell me to unblock him and be nice to him as it was our neighbour pack and they didn't want their friendship to be tarnished."

"Missy," he growls. "If you say to be nice with him..."

I shrug, chuckling awkwardly. "He just wanted me to go out with him. Like, he said we should talk things out-"

Cayden skyrockets back onto his feet, snarling at me, "You told me your brother just lied to the judge! We knew that they were plotting together... And now you tell me that your family was plotting to get you to be his mistress even before this fucking mess! Your father?! Missy!"

"No! No! No!" I say, standing up as well. "He just wanted to save the business and the pacts he had with him. And me insulting the Alpha surely did not help."

His chest heaves, but I step forward, raising my voice. "Cayden! You don't understand. You have all the privileges to act high and mighty while we were living like humans in the vicinity of a dragon's cave. Your pack members kept coming into our territories to wreak havoc! Goddess knows how much we were afraid of your attacks! You kept provoking us and I know how you loved playing with us! I think I knew about Fynn even before actually meeting him. Our fathers kept making a pact with you only to be depressed about you just spitting on it just because you could."

"Missy..." he growls, but my frustration keeps pushing the words out of me, making me feel like I'm about to suffocate.

"We were so scared of all of you. All the lives you took just because you wanted to have fun and came to our borders, provoking our warriors who were already shitting their pants just to see who would get more kills! You have to be fucking kidding me if you see anything more than fear in my father's request because he felt your breath in his neck and losing an ally meant death, Cayden!"

He looks at me as I stop yelling at him, catching my breath.

There are a thousand other words twirling in my mind, but I force myself to keep my mouth shut, his rageful expression causing my voice to die in my throat.

"Are you done?"

"Yes," I whisper as I nod and he scoffs.

He takes a step towards me, his gaze holding so much hate as he tilts his head. "Is it Ricky who told you all those things?"

"What do you mean?" I ask, my voice nearly failing me as he grins, even if it doesn't reach his eyes.

"Ah, you would do anything to hear that bastard talk. Drink up every lie he dishes you, right, my Luna?" his voice is low and cold, getting my skin to cover in goosebumps.

"Now you are being cruel," I hiss, hating how my voice breaks as I swallow a sob.

"How did he know about the games we played with your patrols? Did he see our scoring boards?"ŴŴ.NôvêlworM.c@©

"Stop it, Cayden." My eyes fill up with tears as I realise that it must have been a scheme from the start.

And I have always been just a small, insignificant token.

"No, no... Tell me!" He steps closer, grabbing my face and pulling me close. "Who was winning? Me, Finnegan, or maybe even Hendrick?"

I push against his chest as his fingers dig deeper into my cheeks and the pressure of his hand on my chin increases. "Let me go, Cayden. You are hurting me!"

"Did you see any of the bodies? Did you see us going to trial for all those deaths? See us play basketball with their heads?"

I claw onto his shirt as he holds me firmly, leaning in to whisper into my ear, "It's ridiculous of you to even think that could be true. You would have noticed if we had done such things, as getting the Alpha's daughter would have been the funniest thing to do, especially as we heard about how beautiful you were. As if we would have made those stupid and useless deals if we had planned not to respect them in the first place. We would have just taken over, eliminated everyone and would have been able to get you sooner. Without having to play all those childish games."

My breath hitches in my throat as he bites into my neck, making me whimper. "Even now, I could just go on a rampage and take you back home without facing any fucking consequences. Want to see that happen, my Love?"

I finally manage to free myself from his grip and push myself backwards to slap him. Even if his head snaps to the side, and he clenches his jaw, I'm convinced that he moved his face only to prevent me from breaking my hand. "I said stop it! Why do you need to act like this? I was living there, why can't you talk it out normally with me if I was led on?!"

"And why are you still convinced that we are the absolute worst?"

"I'm sorry, okay?! It's my family we are talking about. This situation is crazy for me! I can't cope with this as easily as you do. Everyone is keeping secrets from me and then gets enraged if I don't act like they would like me to. I'm so fed up! My heart hurts, my feet are killing me and my hormones are already all over the place without you all playing tug of war with me.ŴŴ.NôvêlŴŴ©ŴŴ.M(c)(e)m

He tsks, and before I can even react, he is already out of the room, making the door hit the wall with a bang. "Don't worry, I'll leave you alone now!"

"No, wait! Cayden!" I shout after him, running into the hallway under the disappointed gaze of my mates. "Where are you going?"

Cayden growls, closing the door behind him. "As if that was your fucking business."