

Special Chapter - The Babies

ARTEMISIA

"It will all be alright," I say, laying my hand on Cayden's knee as he shakes it repeatedly.

He smiles at me, leaning to me to kiss me. "Sorry, it's just such a mess. And you know how they are looking at us weirdly because of this multiple-mate dynamic."

"Yeah, I know," I answer calmly, squeezing his hand reassuringly. "But it will be alright."

The door opens, and we get up automatically. The judge, who held the hearing that nearly separated me from my mates years ago, is coming in with a big smile. "Luna and Alpha Blackwood, what a pleasure to see you again."

I do a small curtsy while Cayden remains unmoved, and just greets him back. "Judge Attwood, the pleasure is all ours."

'Oh, I love it when he is acting all businessy,' Cassy purrs, making me suppress a giggle as I see Cayden grin as he must have heard her.

"Please, take a seat," the judge invites us, and we sit back down

He sits behind his desk filled with piled-up files and smiles at us.

At first, I thought that it was utterly stupid to have us wait in such an office with all those files on display until Cayden explained to me that they were all about us.

Well...

"First, I want to congratulate you on the birth of your daughter. What a joy that must have been," he says lovingly, and Cayden and I smile at each other before he clears his throat.

"Yeah, it has been indescribable."

The judge nods with a happy expression before he taps the desk with his hand and takes a few documents from the pile next to him.

A painful flashback ripples through me, making me shift in my seat. Cayden, who notices it right away, takes my hand, making my nerves calm down.

"So, as there are a few public concerns in circulation, I just want to break your family situation down for the court to see what we will be working with. You understand that this is quite an astonishing situation," the judge grins, and I scoot forward to the edge of my seat. "We are still looking into your, Luna Blackwood, and little Emma's powers and we are absolutely amazed by what is coming to light, so we thank you for your patience and cooperation with us."

"Of course," I say, rubbing my sweaty palms against my skirt.

He flashes me a swift smile before repositioning his glasses and looking at the documents. "Your firstborn is Ace Blackwood, is that correct?"

"Yes, sir," I answer, and he nods.

"And he was born a few minutes before his twin, Kai Blackwood."

"Correct," I say again, squirming in my seat.

He looks up at Cayden, gesturing towards him with the papers, "But they aren't yours, right?"

"All the pups are mine, Your Honour. But no, he is not biologically mine," Cayden responds with a proud smile.

I caress his leg, feeling a sense of pure happiness streaming through me. "The biological father is Finnegan Blackwood, Your Honour."

"Very well," he says, scribbling down something on another document. "Aaaand, two years later, Ryder Blackwood was born?"

"He is mine," Cayden bursts out, puffing his chest proudly. "Biological, I mean."

"My congratulations, Alpha Blackwood. What wonderful news," the Judge bows his head slightly to Cayden. "If I might ask how you intend to proceed on the matter of the succession of the Alpha title?"

Cayden crosses his hands, leaning forward. "Like I said. All those pups are like they were mine. So, I really am willing to do it the traditional way and if Ace as firstborn will comply with all the requirements, I will be happy to nominate him as my successor to the title."

"Perfect," the Judge comments, taking another few notes. "I heard that he has a special power as well. What about his brother?"

"His brother has a few traits of the same power, but Ace got the biggest part," I say quietly, making the judge look at me with a lifted brow.

"Ha," he barks out. "What's better than a healthy dose of fraternal rivalry. But I'm looking forward to the run for that Alpha title."

He wiggles his finger in front of our faces before he buries his nose into the documents again. We wait patiently until he has finished writing as he continues his questioning. "And then, three years later, there was another boy. This is just marvellous. Vince, correct?"

"Yes," I answer. "He is Logan Balckwood's son."

Flashing me a smile is all the interaction I got before he crosses his hands, laying them on the desk in front of him. "And quite a few years later."

He lifts a piece of paper, checking the dates. "Four, to be exact, there comes your daughter. She is a hybrid, is that correct?"

"Yes, Your Honour," Cayden answers, as he must have sensed my voice failing me. "She is Hendrick Alaric's son."

I know that hybrids like Serena are rare. And not only because her father is a millennia-old vampire, but also because of the pending investigations regarding Cassy's powers.

So, it is only natural that I fear that they will take her from me. My father had often told me about the royal court and how they would train special talents just to exploit them for their army.

I'm terrified that they will do the same with my daughter and I will never see her again.

"That's very interesting," the Judge says, narrowing his eyes at me.

I straighten my spine, forcing up a smile to cover my unease. "She is a very cute kid."

"I'm sure of that," he lights up, collecting his papers and laying them back on the pile.

I gulp as I follow the movements, and jerk up as Cayden touches my elbow and gets me to stand up.

"I thank you for your time, Alpha and Luna Blackwood. And congratulations again," the Judge says, standing up as well and pulling at his robe.

Doing another curtsy, I get pushed out of the room gently by Cayden. As soon as we have left the room, he moves his hand to take my hand and we walk to the car silently

We settle in and we are already on the road for some minutes as I sigh. "They will come for our daughter as soon as she is old enough, won't they?"

"Not if I can prevent it," he growls, wrapping his arm around me to pull me close. "I'll protect all of you with everything that is in my power, even with my life if it's necessary."

I lift my hand, laying it on his cheek, thankfully that I can feel so protected by the man I love. "Thank you so much, Cayden."

"Everything for you, my love," he smiles at me, cupping my chin to pull me in for a kiss.