

Chapter 2: A Smart Girl

-Helena-

After getting the living room cleaned up, I hurried into the kitchen where Beth was already taking care of everything. She was the leader in the kitchen. She made food that was more delicious than anything I had ever tasted. We might have to feed all the wolves in the pack first, but after that, we could enjoy it as well.

"Oh, there you are, Helena!" she said. "I was starting to think you weren't coming!"

She pointed her big spoon at me as I put on an apron, almost acting a little accusingly, but I laughed and shook my head.

"No, just had to take care of something the twins broke."

"Again?"

"You know how they are."

"Yes, I know they come out here to steal cookies. I can't tell you how many times I have had to slap them over the fingers."

"At least you can get away with that. If I tried just yelling at them, they would just cry very loudly, and their mother would come and probably slap me if not re me for yelling at her precious pups."

Beth sighed and shook her head. She knew how those little monsters loved to torture me, and how their mother really didn't like me. They were spoiled brats, but I wasn't their personal slave. I served the entire pack, so at least I didn't have to focus on them the whole time I was there working.

"They will be awful people when they grow up."

"Shh! Beth!" I said and ran over to her, putting my hand over her mouth. "You can't say such things!"

Beth pulled my hand away and chuckled.

"I have worked for this house for... 30 years. Don't come here and tell me what I can't do!" she said, and winked.

Beth was the sweetest, even if she could be hard when needed to. She had worked for this pack for a very long time, cooking for them every day, and she was known for being the best cook there was. People would come and visit this pack just for her food. I felt proud to know her and to be working with her. We were a good team.

"Sh!#! Sorry! I am here!"

Suddenly, Mona jumped into the kitchen, her hair all messy, and her shirt was buttoned wrong. I turned to Beth, who rolled her eyes and shook her head. We knew exactly where she had been. Mona was very beautiful with her shiny auburn hair and the curvy body that she knew how to show off, but in an elegant way. Carter and the other male wolves from the pack had often looked her way, and she certainly didn't mind giving them some extra attention.

"With Carter?" Beth asked a little accusingly.

"And?" Mona asked.

"And this won't get you a ticket into the pack. Just his bed," Beth said, not even looking at Mona.

I looked between them. I understood Beth was just looking out for us. Mona, though, really was tired of being the lone wolf servant. She wanted more. She had always dreamt of more. It stung, though, every time I knew she had been with Carter. It didn't sting when it was with others but him... I knew I was stupid for crushing on him. I was nothing like Mona. I was very petite and, while I had this long blond hair, I was a shy, small person who you didn't really notice. I didn't want to be noticed either. It was just better staying out of other people's way. I had quickly learned that growing up. My dad had not been a person who enjoyed stepping out of people's way. He dreamt of more too, and it had cost him his life.

"You have worked here for 30 years," Mona said. "Maybe if you had offered a little more, they might have wanted you to join."

I looked at Mona, shocked. With Beth and her, it was always hot and cold. Sometimes they seemed to be the worst of enemies, other times almost like mother and daughter. Beth took nothing of it to heart. She continued frying eggs, while not even acknowledging Mona. I walked over to Mona, who sighed, shaking her head, and she knew she had overstepped.

"That was mean," I whispered.

She rolled her eyes a bit and crossed her arms.

"Fine! I am sorry," she said.

Beth didn't look at her though, and Mona just turned to me.

"See?"

I sighed and didn't know what to say. I couldn't just magically x things. They always worked it out in the end, anyway.

"Maybe just button your shirt right."

"What?" she asked and looked down. "Oh..."

"Yeah..."

She quickly grew embarrassed despite never really being the shy kind of person. She quickly xed her shirt, and we helped make the rest of the food. Other lone wolves worked here as well, but they were cleaning the big house, so we were in charge of making the food. When it was done, we brought it into the big dining hall where a lot of pack members were already waiting. Carter was there too, laughing and joking with his friends. My heart began to beat faster, but I quickly focused on my task and put the food out before joining Beth and Mona in the kitchen again.

"Why do you look ushed?" Beth asked, as I came inside.

"What?"

"You look ushed."

She knew I crushed hard on Carter, but I just shook my head and she narrowed her eyes.

"Stay away from him," she said. "You know it could never be."

"I know..."

"Be smarter than certain people."

Mona was now sitting by the kitchen island waiting for us to go eat.

"It will work," she said.

"Being with half of the pack doesn't give you a ticket to the inside," Beth said.

Mona would not listen and just went to the smaller table away where other lone wolves were gathering so we could eat. I walked over to Beth, who was preparing the rest of the food for us.

"You know she dreams of more," I told her. "Why destroy those dreams?"

Beth turned to me. She was even smaller than me, but very round.

"Because that is what they are, Helena. Dreams... Nothing more."

Beth looked almost a little crushed that she had to point this out, and I sighed and nodded.

"I understand."

"Dream of something you can actually have," she said.

"Like?"

"Like a ticket out of here."

I looked at her, shocked, and Beth moved closer to me.

"You're a smart girl," she said. "Don't waste your life here."

"How is it wasting? I am helping my mother."

"I know," Beth said. "But you have so much potential. I see it. How about school?"

"I can barely afford it as it is," I told her. "I don't think I will be able to go to college."

I was nishing high school this year. I was home schooled since I was so busy also helping my mother earn enough so we could stay where we were. I didn't believe, though, I would have the money to continue. Not with how things were.

"I have been saving a little extra on the side. Tell me when you know where you want to go and then come to me."

I looked at Beth, shocked, then shook my head.

"No! Beth... I couldn't."

"You can, because if there is anyone in this kitchen who will be able to make it out. It's you," she said.

I couldn't believe she was speaking of this place, as if it was... hell, almost. I didn't see it as such. Despite the hard work and how the other pack members liked to make it hard for me often just because they could, it brought in money. Jobs didn't just hang on trees.

"Beth..."

"I won't listen to any more," she said. "You come to me."

She began placing the food on different plates, then handed them to me.

"Off you go."

I smiled at her, not even sure how I could ever repay her, but I was so happy. Maybe she was right. Maybe I should take the chance and focus on school.