

Chapter 18

Venus POV

The lunch got over amicably. But I knew that the Oak Pride pack was going to be rife with gossip about Lawson sisters.

In the end when all the guests left, father came to me and said in a low voice, "I'm glad that Aaron remained by your side all the while. But I have to warn Vicky." He shook his head with a sigh, and I knew he was tired of her antics. "Let's go home, chickee, and talk to her."

I lowered my head and bit my bottom lip. "Daddy, I don't want to go home."

"Why?" he asked, bewildered. "You can't stay here until you are married."

"It's not that," I responded with hesitation, not knowing how to convey my feelings. "I—" Damn it. What could I say? "I don't want to stay with Vicky in the same house."

My father jerked his head back. "Then where do you want to stay?" he asked, not liking my words. "I don't want the gossip about you sisters to spiral out of control!"

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I pursed my lips. "Daddy, can I stay in the cabin that you and mom used to go to for holiday? It's only until I get married to Aaron. After that, I'll come to stay with him."

My dad became speechless. He had a pained look in his eyes. He cupped my cheeks and placed a kiss on my forehead. "I don't want you to stay away. If anyone has to stay out, it is Gaia and Vicky."

"No daddy," I replied. I knew he had a chance at happiness with Gaia. How could I snatch it from him? "I want to stay there because that cabin reminds me of mum. Vicky is already hurting because of this conundrum. She would need both you and her mom. I guess this would be the best solution."

My father closed his eyes, taking a deep breath in. "Okay..." he muttered. "But come back home now so that you may pack your things up."

"Thank you, daddy!" I exclaimed, hugging him tightly.

"What is going on?" Luna Marie came to us with a smile.

My father chuckled. "Venus wants to live in our cabin at the edge of the woods. For now."

"Oh! That's a lovely place," Luna said. "I'll visit you

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sometime. It reminds me of your mother so much. Along with Aaron and Eric, you used to spend a lot of time in the nearby woods, playing hide and seek. Often, the three of you would return covered in mud." She laughed, placing her hand on her heart. "Those were such beautiful days..." her voice trailed off and my father's face turned sad.

"Sure, Luna Marie," I grinned to lighten up the mood.

"But—" she said, picking up my hand. "Now that you are the future Luna of the pack, we will send some warriors to guard you there."

"Okay," I agreed.

Aaron came to say goodbye to us. He was looking exhausted, but when he kissed me on the forehead, I was surprised. A pale blush rose to my cheeks. "See you tomorrow," he said softly. His phone started buzzing, and he took it out of his suit's pocket. It was Nathan calling him. "I have to take this," he said and walked away quickly.

Home looked like I had come into a cemetery when we returned in the evening. There was a pin drop silence, and the air was thick with tension and misery.

The cabin was one of our many properties around the pack. It had all the amenities and so I bothered

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myself to just carry my books and clothes.

Next morning, daddy had to go early, but he had arranged for a driver to drop me at the cabin. In order to avoid Gaia and Vicky, I slipped out of the house at 6AM. When I reached the cabin, I was overwhelmed. Memories came flooding in. Of my mom and dad kissing each other as I watched movies or played video games. Tears threatened to spill out from my eyes. I walked inside, wiping them. Luna Marie had already sent two warriors for me already as guards. They bowed to me and helped the driver unload my luggage.

Loneliness enveloped me immediately, but at least I could breathe freely here. I took a bath and came downstairs to watch the live news as I made breakfast. I wondered if Aaron would visit me here as I spread peanut butter on my bread. However, my heart raced and my breath caught in my throat in pure panic when the news flashed a scene from the Tride Falls with the caption, "What is our future Luna doing?"

It was a video of me sandwiched and dancing between two boys without a care in the world. It changed to Aaron punching the boys, shouting, "She is my fiancée!"

Blood drained from my face. This wasn't all. A photo of Aaron kissing Vicky just before our engagement flashed. The headline said, "It seems

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our future Alpha heir can't control his emotions when it comes to Lawson sisters. Will he marry one of them and make the other his mistress?"

"Fuck!" I rasped, grabbing my hair and pulling them in frustration. This was a nightmare. The press was having a field day. Who could have leaked this video and the photo?

My phone buzzed, and I balked when I saw daddy's name flashing on the screen. With shaky fingers, I picked up the call. "D—daddy?"

"Venus Lawson!" he shouted. "Have you seen the news?"

"Yes," I murmured, literally trembling.

"How could you do that a night before your engagement?"

"Daddy, it was—"

"Shut the fuck up!" he hissed. "The press is going to destroy my reputation in one day! I am so fed up with you and Vicky!"

I started crying because I knew that because of me, he was ashamed. People would definitely question him wherever he would go.

"I wish your mother was alive. She would have kept

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you on a leash," he yelled. "But now that your mom isn't here, your punishment is that you will stay in that cabin and not go out anywhere!"

"But daddy—"

"Shut up!" he bellowed. "Just stay the fuck there!"

He disconnected the call, and I sank to the floor, crying alone, feeling so lonely. "Mom, I want you..." I murmured. I clutched the phone to my chest and curled my knees up. "Please come."

A few moments later, Aaron called.

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