

## Chapter 10

Zayden

I'm dreading the inevitable today. Even though I'm sitting here getting to know my amazingly beautiful mate, I know there is something I have to take care of and stop before Everleigh hears it from someone else.

I sighed and tilted her head up to look at me.

"My love, there is something I need to take care of. I should only be gone for a few hours at most. Why don't you go take a bath and relax? I'll have food brought up for you before I leave."

"Is everything okay, Zayden?" She asked with worry lacing her voice.

"Yes baby. I don't want to upset you, but I also don't want to hide anything."

"Okay?"

I took a deep breath trying to steady myself. "My mother has been pressuring me to choose someone to be Luna. If I didn't, she would choose one for me. Needless to say, I was waiting for you. My mate. But she gave me the timeline of my birthday last month to you and I didn't until a few nights ago. Now I need to go talk to her so she doesn't try to force it on me. I wouldn't do it anyway because the only person I want as my mate and my Luna is you." I said, cupping her cheek and rubbing my thumb over her cheekbone.

I looked into her eyes and could tell she was deep in thought.

"What will you do if she doesn't like the answer you gave her? I don't want to cause a rift between you and your family." She said softly. "If I have to, I will leave to keep the peace."

"You are NOT going anywhere, little missy. You are mine! Now and forever. No one will take you away from me. If they try, they will die." I told her, feeling my anger coming to the surface.

I see her try to shrink back from the power radiating off of me. I take a few deep breaths, breathing in her scent to calm myself and my wolf.

"I'm sorry I didn't mean to upset you." She whimpered, burying her face in her hands.

I put my arms around her and dragged her over to sit on my lap. I placed my cheek on the top of her head.

"Baby, you need to learn that you are here. You are mine as I am yours. NO ONE will force you out. Otherwise, they will have to deal with Rye's wrath." I carefully said to her.

I feel her relax a little bit before she leans her head on my chest. I could really stay like this forever, but I can't. I sighed.

"I'm going to get you a bath ready. Okay, baby?" I asked softly on to her head.

I feel her nod. I gently pick her up and place her next to me on the bed before getting up and heading to the bathroom. I turn the water on and get it to the perfect temperature before I grab the Epsom salt and Lavender bubble bath and add to the water. Once it's done, I go to Everleigh.

"Alright baby, I got it ran for you." I said, reaching over and picking her up and carrying her to the bathroom. I sat her down on the stool by the tub. "Go ahead and get undressed and take a relaxing bath. I'll be back sooner than you think." I gave her a quick kiss on the head before walking out. As soon as I get the door closed, I mind link the kitchen staff to bring up some easy foods for my mate. Then I asked Evan, Grey and Dev and asked where my mother was.

I headed to her ome since that's where they said she was. It didn't take me long to get there, since it was just a oor below where I was. I knocked on the door before opening it.

My mom looks up from her computer before saying in a clipped voice, "Couldn't wait until I said come in?"

"I can walk into any room I want to without waiting, mother."

She sighed. "What do I owe the pleasure of your company, Zayden?"

"It's about the deal."

"What about it?" She asked harshly. "Even if you nd your mate you will have to reject her now. A deal is a deal."

"Like hell I will, mother!" I said, starting to fume. "She will be the packs and my Luna. You cannot stop it. It is her rightful place!"

"If that's so, then where has she been? Surely you would have found her before now." She said with an amused tone.

"Things happen that are out of people's control. You of all people should know that after what happened to you." I stated, raising my voice.

"You will not take that tone with me, Zayden. You may be the Alpha but I am still your mother and Luna of this pack!" She snarled at me.

"I will do as I please. You will not make me reject my mate. Remember how it was when your chosen mate tried to get you to reject dad?! How did that work out for you?"

"Don't you dare bring that into this Zayden! That was completely different!"

"Is that so? How is it different? I have found my f\*\*\*\*g mate mother and you are trying to force me in to a chosen mate! There is no damn difference!" I tried pleading with her.

She huffs trying to calm herself down. "I will give you three months to bring her up to Luna's standards. If she is not ready by then, then you will accept Desi as your chosen mate and Luna for this pack."

"You've got to be kidding me." I said, exasperated. "Seriously, after everything, you are still trying to force me to have a chosen mate?" I felt disgusted with my mother. How can someone do this to their own son? "If you force me, mother, do not think I won't go to the council over this. This is going too far. There are laws in places for a reason when it comes to fated mates!" I yelled at her.

"I don't care. I am doing what I have to, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of this pack is taken care of by a strong Luna."

"Not everyone is born into a Luna position! It can take years for someone to get the complete hang of it. There is no way someone can get it all in by three months." Ugh. Why is she being so f\*\*\*\*g dicult?

"Even if you mate and mark her, there is a way to get rid of it and her with no harm coming to the other mate. Think of that before you do anything rash, Zayden. Now get out." She demanded. As I go out the door, I slam it shut, causing a few cracks in the wall and door frame. I don't care anymore. This woman is driving me and Rye insane. He wants to rip her apart even though she is my mother. I can't deal with this anymore from her. I need to go talk to the elders.