

## Chapter 9

Tabitha's POV

"That's right."

I went straight to the point, and he was faster at it.

"You jerk!" I felt desperate, tears streaming down my face. "How could you treat me like this? And how on earth did the werewolves of the Silver Moon Pack offend you?"

Derek remarked, his tone icy, "Tabitha, if you wanna know the answer, go ask your dear father what he's done."

"What did he do? Just fucking tell me!" I shouted hysterically.

Derek stood there, looking nonchalant. "Go ask him yourself."

"So, marrying me was never about love?" I asked, sobbing.

I tried to find some trace of warmth in his eyes but I failed.

"That's right. I plotted to get close to you from the very beginning. It's all about revenge."

"You hate me?"

"Exactly. Tabitha, it's what you gotta go through for being John's daughter. I want y'all to live in agony forever to atone for your sins!"

With that, I heard a painful whimper from Crystal.

She was trembling, getting even weaker. And my wound started hurting as if it was being ripped apart.

I knew that my wound had worsened.

"What sins? Are you talking about Elena?" I asked him, taking a deep breath.

He gave me a scornful look as if it was no surprise I knew that name.

"Tabitha, you have no idea what crime John has committed. Keep guessing or go ask him, but don't expect me to tell you."

Derek turned around. Before leaving, he threw over his shoulder, "If you think that you'll be safe because of our mate bond, sorry to disappoint you. I'll be rejecting you pretty soon."

I hurriedly caught up with him and grabbed onto the hem of his shirt.

"Tell me what exactly Elena had to do with my dad! We didn't even know anyone from your pack before I met you," I begged.

Derek gave no reply. He just lifted his arm, brushing me off effortlessly.

The pain from the wound hit me, and I dropped to the ground in a heap.

Derek looked down at me, hissing, "Stop playing the victim, Tabitha. I know you better than anyone else. You were always one of the top fighters in the Silver Moon Pack. Almost as strong as the Gamma. I ain't gonna fall for your lame act."

I gently touched my wound in the belly.

I could feel the blood soaking through my shirt.

Raising my head, I met his gaze. It was filled with contempt as if he wanted to slice me open.

"I wasn't pretending. It's just that I'm not feeling well now," I argued, enduring the pain.

Before I could finish, Derek squatted down, his rough palm brushing my cheek.

He sneered, "Like father, like daughter. You are as good at acting as your dad. Are you doing this to get money from me?"

His words were even colder than the howling wind, stabbing right at my heart.

Enraged and devastated, I slapped his hand away hard. "My dad's always been upright. He would never hurt others!"

Derek scoffed, not interested in arguing with me at all.

"What changed you?" I questioned, finding him like a stranger.

The man who once vowed to protect me forever and keep me from tears had gone. Now, my tears would only please him.

Even the warm glow of the streetlight couldn't soften his face. All I could read from it was impatience.

Feeling Crystal's strength waning, I worried I might not make it to the rejection ceremony.

Since Derek refused to tell me the truth, I gotta find it on my own.

I couldn't collapse now. Or, my father and the Silver Moon Pack would face unimaginable danger.

So I forced myself up and said, "Since you hate me so much, then reject me now. I know my pain will weaken your wolf just like it weakens mine. Aren't you afraid of rogue invasion? Do you want your pack to go through what the Silver Moon Pack had?"

Derek frowned. "It would not weaken my abilities at all. Those rogues can't hurt us, either."

"Then restore my rights as Luna," I demanded, my voice low.

"Nice try," he sneered.

"Derek, if you don't, I'll banish myself," I told him.

"Banish yourself? You think threatening me with becoming a rogue will work?"

"It's fine for me. But if others know that the Luna abandons the Black Thorn Pack, the whole pack will weaken. Are other werewolves in the pack strong enough to fight against those rogues like you?"

Derek stared at me as if he was discerning if I was bluffing.

I knew I couldn't back down at this moment.

So I began solemnly, "I, Luna of the Black Thorn Pack, Tabitha Hartley, have decided to banish..."

"Fine, I'll give you what you want!" Derek cut me off abruptly, his teeth gritted. "You are just as despicable as your dad. So what if you regain your Luna rights? You'll soon have nothing to do with my pack."

With that, he walked away without looking back.

And I immediately ran into the packhouse. Since my rights were restored, the first thing I did was certainly to square away Dad's medical bills.