

The Alpha Who Chose the Hunt

My warriors are already waiting, clustered near the entrance door, faces grim and eyes sharp.

"Alpha," one of them says carefully, "she's nowhere in the hotel. We checked every oor. Every stairwell. Every storage room." He exhales. "We tore through the ventilation shafts, the laundry chutes, the service tunnels—hell, we checked gaps behind walls barely wide enough for a child to squeeze through."

Another warrior shakes his head. "No trace. Not even on the security feeds. It's like she dissolved into thin air."

My sts curl at my sides.

She's an omega.

Or at least... she smells like one.

So where the hell would she go?

I stare at him, disbelief simmering into rage. "She was here." I snap. "Don't tell me an omega just evaporated."

This is my rst time in this hotel—territory owned by the Alpha King himself. I came on a business summons, one of the most prominent alphas invited to compete for the princess's hand.

And the throne.

I'm not the only alpha here. Packs from every corner of the continent have sent their best—lords, war heroes, strategists dressed in silk and arrogance. But everyone knows the truth.

I'm the strongest among them.

The most dangerous.

The Alpha King didn't just invite me openly—he sent a private summons too. A quiet one. As if he were already hoping.

Apparently, I'm meant to smile. Display strength without threatening. Charm the court. Prove my worth through trials, feasts, diplomacy, obedience. Win her favor. Win her heart. Win the crown.

Instead, the Moon Goddess laughs in my face and drops my mate straight into my arms.

And now the princess and her throne mean absolutely nothing to me.

I bite out a harsh laugh.

"Spread out," I snap. "Search the surrounding streets. Work with hotel security. Bribe them. Threaten them. Break bones if you have to—I don't care."

My gaze hardens, alpha pressure rolling off me in lethal waves.

"She's here somewhere. And if you truly value your lives, you'll nd her."

They move instantly, rushing out of the hotel without another word.

Then I feel it.

That familiar presence at my side.

My brother.

He steps closer, eyes sharp, posture relaxed in the way only someone who has fought for his place can be. Beta not by blood—but by strength.

"This might actually be for the best," he says calmly. Too calmly, like he hasn't just stepped into the center of my storm.

I turn to him slowly.

Dangerously.

"Say that again," I warn.

He doesn't back down. "Stop looking for her. Go to the palace. Marry the Princess. Become King. The selection has already started. We can't lose the throne over some little omega b***h. We get the power we need."

The word barely leaves his mouth before my hand closes around his throat.

I lift him off the ground with ease. His eyes widen, but he doesn't struggle. He knows me too well.

The air around us cracks.

"You will never," I say softly, dangerously, "refer to my mate like that again."

Shock ashes through his eyes—not fear.

I loosen my grip just enough for him to breathe.

"You forget who you're talking to," he rasps.

"No," I snarl, releasing him with a violent shove. He stumbles back but manages to stay on his feet. "You forget who she is to me."

He coughs, dragging air into his lungs. "Are you really not going to the palace? You could lose your chance at the throne."

I stare past him, my jaw locked tight.

"If I were destined to be king," I say coldly, "the Moon Goddess would have made me the princess's mate. Then nothing—no one—could have stopped me from taking the throne."

He scoffs, disbelief slipping through his composure. "I can't believe you're willing to give up the crown for an omega you met for barely an hour."

"She is my future Luna," I say evenly. "And yes. I am."

He rubs his throat, then exhales sharply. "Have you forgotten your dream?"

The word strikes deeper than I expect.

Dream.

Power.

Protection.

My past surges up without warning.

I am ten years old again—small, furious, trembling as I stand between my mother and my father's raised st. I remember the sound of bones breaking that are not mine. I remember screams swallowed by cold stone walls.

I was ten when I challenged my father.

Ten.

He had been a monster long before that.

I remember how he accused her of betrayal every time she carried life. How he despised daughters—called them weakness, lth.

Every time my mother carried a girl, he made sure she never lived long enough to cry.

I remember blood. Bruises. Silence.

The last time, my mother does not scream. She simply stares at the wall while he laughs.

That is the day something inside me breaks.

I challenge him under the full moon—small, bleeding, furious. A child standing before a monster.

And I win.

He leaves—broken but alive—swearing revenge. Promising to return with monsters worse than himself, to build horrors in the shadows.

That night, my brother and I make a vow.

I will become Alpha King.

I will claim ultimate power.

Unlimited resources.

An army strong enough to end him forever.

"So I could protect the people I love," I nish quietly.

My brother exhales. "And now?"

I close my eyes for a heartbeat.

"Now the Moon Goddess has given me more than power," I say. "She's given me purpose. A reason to ght."

I open my eyes.

"Send a message to the palace," I order. "A formal apology. Inform them I will not be attending."

My brother stiffens. "Kei—"

"I have found my fated mate," I continue, my voice unwavering. "The greatest gift the Moon Goddess could bestow. No throne is worth denying her."

"Are you truly sure about this?" he murmurs.

"Yes," I say, baring my teeth in a slow, lethal smile. "And anyone who stands between me and her..."

I let the threat hang unished.

I don't need to nish it.

Because somewhere out there, my mate is running.

And I am very, very good at hunting.

—

Two days.

Forty-eight hours.

No scent.

No trail.

No trace.

It's as if the earth swallowed her whole just to spite me.

My wolf is losing his mind.

He paces inside me, claws scraping against bone, snarling so violently it feels like my skull might crack. Every unfamiliar female scent makes him lunge. Every shadow looks like her for half a heartbeat—and every time it isn't, the rage doubles.

Sleep is a joke.

Food tastes like ash.

I tear through streets, slums, markets, rooftops. I interrogate hoteliers, guards, merchants, beggars. I threaten men who have never even seen an omega in their lives simply because my instincts scream maybe.

Nothing.

She vanished.

And the bond—new, fragile, blazing hot—aches like an open wound. Like something precious was ripped out before it had time to settle.

I punch the wall of my hotel room so hard the concrete cracks.

"Where are you?" I snarl into the empty space.

My wolf answers with a howl so violent I have to brace myself against the table.

She's alive.

I know she is.

If she were dead, the bond would be screaming.

This... this is something else.

This is captivity.

Night drags itself in, heavy and suffocating. I force myself back to my room—not to rest, but because even predators need to sharpen their knives.

The corridor is quiet.

Too quiet.

Then I see it.

A single folded piece of paper slipped beneath my door.

My heart slams.

I freeze, senses aring, scanning for threats. Nothing. No unfamiliar scent. No ambush.

Slowly, carefully, I bend and pick it up.

My ngers tighten as I unfold it.

Only one line is written.

The omega you are looking for in the palace is one of the Alpha King's maids.

The world goes very, very still.

Then it explodes.

"The palace," I breathe, fury and relief crashing together.

My mate.

In his palace.

Working as a maid.

No wonder I couldn't nd her. The palace was the last place I ever expected her to be.

My hands shake—not with fear, but with barely leashed violence.

I don't hesitate before mindlinking.

"Get ready," I snap at my brother. "We're going to the palace."

His surprise bleeds through the link. "Finally. You're back to your senses. Are we going to ask for the princess's hand in marriage?"

I laugh.

It's sharp. Ugly. Dangerous.

"No," I say, my voice like drawn steel. "We're going to get my mate out of the palace."

A pause stretches.

Then my brother exhales slowly.

"...Well, he says, this should be fun."

I smile.

It is not a pleasant thing.