

Chapter 12

KINGSTON

Aeliana is a pain in the ass.

I don't understand why she lashed out at Audrey when she was merely trying to help. She didn't want or give any opinions when asked, her Mom and mine were planning our wedding like an afternoon tea party, and she just sat there. Audrey's ideas were fresh and more in her age group's interests but she just shut her down.

Had she politely declined that would have been okay, but she was so rude and made her cry. Not even her bitter words or attitude changed my parents' perception of her. I have a feeling my mother will stick up for her every wrong as she does with Damien, who couldn't make it today.

"You marked her?" Rowan asks, jogging behind me as I search for Audrey's table.

"I had to," I say in a bored tone.

Marking Aeliana was nothing but duty, she knows this too. That's why she was hiding my mark at the table, she acted almost embarrassed to be wearing it.

"That's a very clear mark, you spent time on it," he says, his tone distrusting. "It's not fading."

"Should it?" I snap. I know what he's getting at, he is trying to turn this into something it's entirely not.

Thankfully, I find Audrey, sitting alone upstairs and wiping her tears. I feel terrible, Aeliana embarrassed her when she has been nothing but understanding of my miserable situation.



"I'm sorry Kingston," she sniffs.

I pull out a chair next to her and hand her a handkerchief, "It's alright. You did nothing wrong."

"I just don't understand why she's so mean to me," she sobs. "I thought we could finally be friends but clearly she's not past her unjustified hatred towards me."

"Audrey, stop crying." Rowan sighs, his gaze shifting around. "You're drawing a crowd."

"Shut up Rowan." I hiss. He has no empathy, sometimes.

"Why does she hate me?" Audrey asks, her voice breaking.

"I think hate is a strong word," Rowan almost laughs, covering it with a pathetic cough. "She didn't expect you to be at the table."

Audrey gasps, "Are you defending her?"

"No, I mean..." Rowan pauses. Both Audrey and I wait for him to explain himself. He was there, and everyone at that table saw that Aeliana was in the wrong. "Someone spilt food on her so she was already fuming, you just happened to be there when she needed an outlet."

"But why me?" Audrey frowns, "Couldn't she just scream in the bathroom like a normal person?"

Rowan laughs, "Drey, I don't think that's normal."

"Listen, it's okay." I rub her arm. "Forget her."

"How can I? She's going to be Luna soon," she swallows, her eyes widening with fear. "Lord knows what she'll do to me then."



"Nothing," I assure her. "I will protect you."

"Yeah," Rowan nods. "She won't abuse her power to do anything. We won't allow it."

"She will have no power," I correct him. "You see what I was talking about Ro, you said she'd maybe changed, to give her a chance but did you see how she treated Audrey, unprovoked?"

"It's my fault for existing."

"Drey, don't say things like that." I sigh, "You're not the problem she is, I wish Father could see it but he's too blinded by wanting me to marry my fated mate."

"You shouldn't disobey him," Audrey says, trying to smile but I can see how hurt she is by what Aeliana did. "Uncle Dante simply wants what he thinks is best for you. And besides this is for the pack."

I nod.

For the pack I'd do anything for my pack, and that includes being tied to Aeliana for the rest of my miserable life. Or up until my father dies. But even then, I'd want to honour his decision. Audrey pats my leg, "You should go back to your table."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, I'll be okay," she says, forcing another unconvincing smile. "I will get used to eating alone, shopping alone, and doing a lot alone because Sera isn't here anymore."