The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 351

“Not very long,” Isla answered.

Nara stared at me. “And you didnae tell us?”

Her accent became more noticeable with the words. I’d almost forgotten how much stronger it became whenever she was annoyed or excited. More than two years away had made me forget little things like that.

“This isn’t news I was sending in a letter.”

“You coulda said something.”

My father looked at her. “And miss seeing your reaction?”

Nara considered that before returning her attention to Isla. I could already see plans forming in her head. Whatever they were, I wanted no part in them. Isla could deal with my sister.

“How are you feeling?” Maeve asked.

“Mostly hungry,” Isla answered.

That made my father laugh. Isla looked at me as if I had somehow caused it. I had learned not to comment on how often she ate anymore. It was safer that way.

“She’s always hungry now,” I said.

Isla narrowed her eyes at me. “You were doing well until then.”

Nara laughed and moved back beside Isla. The two of them had known each other less than an hour and Nara was already taking her side. I should have expected it. My sister had always enjoyed having someone help her annoy me.

Lyrienne came closer when everyone settled again. My father looked toward her, and I saw understanding pass between them. He knew she had lost the chance to raise Isla. Now she was getting the chance to be present for her grandchild.

“You knew already?” my father asked.

Lyrienne nodded. “They told me before we came.”

My father smiled. “Then you’ve had more time to get used to it than I have.”

“Not much more.”

Isla returned to her chair beside me. I took her hand again and felt how happy she wa bond. There had been too many moments lately when fear had taken its place. I war to give her something different.

hour

Why I came

Nara sat across from us this time. She kept looking at Isla as though another question occurred to her every few seconds. Maeve finally told her to give Isla time to eat. Nara listened for less than a inute.

“Do you know if it’s a boy or girl?” Nara asked.

“It’s too early,” Isla answered.

Nara nodded. “I don’t care which. I’m going to be the favorite aunt either way.”

I looked at her. “The baby isn’t even born and you’re competing with people.”

“I’m preparing.”

Isla laughed beside me. I could already imagine Nara spoiling our child every chance she got. Telling her no had never worked well when we were younger. I doubted becoming an aunt would improve that.

My father eventually returned to his seat. His eyes kept coming back to me, and I knew there was more he wanted to say. We had spent years living separate lives in different countries. Now I was sitting at his table with my mate and telling him I was going to be a father.

“I wish your mother could have known,” my father said.

I looked at him. The thought had crossed my mind more than once since learning about the baby. My mother had died when I was young, but I still remembered enough of her to know what this would have meant to her. She would have loved Isla.

“I’ve thought about that too,” I said.

Maeve reached across the table and took my father’s hand. There was no discomfort in the gesture or in the way she listened. She had never tried to replace my mother. That was one of the reasons accepting her into my father’s life had been easy.

“She would have been happy for you,” my father said.

“I know.”

Isla squeezed my hand. I looked at her and found her watching me. She knew what it was like to think about a parent who should have been there for moments like this. She had only recently learned enough about Darius to understand what they had both lost.

Lyrienne looked at Isla. I wondered if she was thinking about Darius too. He had written about the possibility of Isla having a child one day. He had never lived long enough to see it hap

My father stood after a while and suggested we leave the table. Nara immediately tr with her to show her the rest of the residence. Isla looked at me before agreeing. I kne

“Don’t let her tell you embarrassing stories about me,” I said.

Nara smiled. “That’s exactly what I’m going to do.”

Isla stood. “I want to hear all of them.”

I watched them leave with Maeve following behind. Lyrienne went with them after telling me she’d make sure Nara didn’t overwhelm Isla. That left my father and me alone.

He waited until their voices were farther away before sitting again. The happiness remained on his face, but I knew our easier conversation had ended. He folded his hands on the table and looked at

“Now tell me why you asked about Silvermere,” he said.

I sat across from him. There was no reason to avoid it anymore. We had come all this way because my father knew something about the north that he’d never told me.

It was time I found out what.

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 352

The crown’s secret

The crown’s secret aius)

My father waited for me to begin. I thought about how much to tell him, but there was little reason to hold anything back now. Silvermere was no longer simply a place missing from maps. Too much of Isla's life had been tied to it.

"We found Silvermere," I said. "Isla and I went there."

My father's expression changed. "You actually found it?"

"Yes."

He sat back in his chair. I had expected surprise, but what I saw looked more like disbelief that the place still existed. That told me his knowledge went beyond seeing a name in old records. I wanted to know how far beyond.

"Elara is the Keeper there," I said. "The territory is still occupied, and they've kept themselves hidden all this time."

My father rubbed a hand over his face. "I wondered if anyone was still there."

That was more than he'd ever told me. I remembered Pryor finding the restriction placed during my grandfather's reign. My father had also kept records mentioning Silvermere while he was Alpha King, yet he'd never once spoken to me about it.

"You knew it existed," I said. "Why didn't you tell me?"

My father looked toward the doorway the others had gone through. "Because my father told me never to speak of it unless Silvermere revealed itself again."

I stared at him. "Grandfather knew?"

"Yes."

That confirmed what the records had already suggested. The Crown's connection to Silvermere hadn't ended generations before my grandfather. He had known enough to place restrictions on its records.

"What exactly did he tell you?" I asked.

My father rested his arms on the table. "Not enough. He told me Silvermere protecte couldn't safely remain in ordinary packs, and that some things were safer without the knowing where they were."

That sounded like the territory we'd visited. Silvermere had protected Celestials, children, and others who needed somewhere beyond the Council's reach. My grandfather had known what the erritory was for. The question was whether he knew Isla had been meant to go there.

“Did he mention Celestials?” I asked.

“Once.”

I waited for him to continue. My father looked uncomfortable now, but he wasn’t trying to avoid the conversation. He seemed to be going through memories he hadn’t needed in years. Vlet him take the time he needed.

“He said the Crown had once helped protect a bloodline the Council feared,” my father said. “He never gave me a family name.”

I thought about Varen. “Did he tell you why?”

“He said an Alpha King’s duty wasn’t always to enforce what the Council wanted.”

That sounded more like the Blackthorn line I knew. My grandfather had apparently understood that the Council could become dangerous when given too much control. It also explained why access to Silvermere had been restricted by the Crown. The restriction may have been protection rather than secrecy for its own sake.

“His order is still in the old ledger,” I said. “Pryor found it.”

My father nodded. “I knew about the order.”

I frowned. “You knew?”

“I renewed it after I became Alpha King.”

That was something Pryor hadn’t found. If my father had renewed the restriction, there should have been another record somewhere. Unless he’d deliberately made sure there wasn’t one.

“Why wasn’t that recorded?” I asked.

“Because my father told me not to record it through the Council.”

I understood immediately. Anything entered through the Council could have been found by someone looking for Silvermere. Varen was long dead by then, but the beliefs he’d left behind

Halvon had proved that.

“I didn’t.”

My father got up and walked toward a cabinet near the far wall. He opened it and searched inside before returning with a small wooden box. He placed it on the table between us.

“My father gave me this shortly before he died,” he said. “He told me to keep it and never send it north unless someone came asking about Silvermere.”

I looked at the box. There was no lock on it, and it looked ordinary enough that I wouldn’t have noticed it among other belongings. My father pushed it toward me. I opened it.

Inside was a folded piece of paper and a small metal disk. I recognized the divided circle immediately. It was the same mark we’d found connected to the old protection network.

“That’s their symbol,” I said.

My father nodded. “I assumed it was.

I picked up the paper. Age had changed its color, but the writing was still readable. There were only a few lines.

“If Silvermere returns to the Crown, listen before you act. The north was hidden because too many men believed power belonged to them simply because they could take it.”

I read the words again. My grandfather hadn’t named Varen or the Keepers. He hadn’t needed to.

“Why didn’t you give this to me when I became Alpha King?” I asked.

“Because I thought Silvermere was gone.”

I couldn’t fault him entirely for that. The territory had been removed from modern records, and even people who knew the name had no proof it remained occupied. Still, I wished he’d told me there was something my grandfather had deliberately hidden.

“You should have told me it existed,” I said.

“I know.”

His answer came without an excuse. I looked at him and saw regret in his face. We couldn’t change what he hadn’t told me, but we could use what he knew now.

Darius Rowan?” I asked.

The crown’s secret

That ended the possibility that he knew about Isla personally. Whatever my grandfather had protected, he'd kept names away from my father. It made sense if secrecy had been the only thing Reeping those families alive.

"Halvon knew about the old network," I said. "His family kept Varen's beliefs alive."

My father looked at me. "Halvon?"

"He tried to kill me."

My father's face changed immediately. He looked toward my side as though he could somehow see the wound through my clothes. I should have expected that reaction. I hadn't planned on hiding it from him.

"When?" he asked.

"Before we came here."

He stood. "And you traveled anyway?"

I smiled despite myself. "You sound like Sera."

My father didn't find that funny. I told him the wound had closed and the wolfsbane was gone from my body. He sat again, though he still looked like he wanted to argue.

"Halvon is alive," I said. "For now."

My father understood what that meant. We needed answers before Halvon faced punishment. After what he'd admitted about Selia and everything else he'd done, there was no question about what would happen when we returned.

I picked up the metal disk again. "I'm taking this back with me."

"It belongs with you now."

closed the box and kept it beside me. We had come looking for answers about Silvermere, and my father had given me something my grandfather intended to reach the Crown if the territory ever returned. This time, the secret wouldn't die with another generation.

Unclaimed Prizes inside

Tap to claim your hamrie pikes its gone,

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 353

What was left behind sla)

I found Caius and his father still sitting at the table when I returned. The wooden box in front of Caius hadn't been there when I left, and I recognized the metal disk beside it before I reached them. The divided circle had become too familiar for me to mistake it. I looked at Caius before taking the seat next to him.

"Where did that come from?" I asked.

"My grandfather gave it to my father before he died," Caius answered. "He was told to keep it unless someone came asking about Silvermere."

I looked at his father. "So your family really did know about the protection network."

"My father knew more than I did," he answered. "I wish I'd asked more questions while I still had the chance."

I understood that feeling better than most. There were questions I would never be able to ask Darius, no matter how many letters or books he had left behind. At least Lyrienne was alive to tell me about him. Caius's grandfather had taken his answers with him.

Caius handed me the paper from inside the box. I read the few lines his grandfather had written and went through them again. The words about men believing power belonged to them reminded me of everything Halvon had admitted. Varen had been dead for centuries, but his ideas had survived him.

"Your grandfather was protecting Silvermere from the Council," I said.

"It looks that way," Caius answered. "My father renewed the restriction when he became Alpha

King."

I turned toward his father. "And no one on the Council knew?"

"No."

That explained why Pryor had only found the original restriction. Caius's father had kept the renewal outside Council records because that was what he'd been instructed to do. It had probably helped keep Silvermere hidden for years.

"Elara should see this," I said.

Caius nodded. "We'll show her when we return."

I placed the paper back inside the box. The metal disk remained in Caius's hand, and I wonder

Unclaimed Prizes Inside

Tap to claim your bonus before it's gone.

Do you think Elara knew about your grandfather?" I asked.

"I don't know," Caius answered. "But I'm done guessing when we can ask her."

His father watched us for a moment. "You said Halvon knew about the network. How much did he know?"

"Enough to spend years looking for what Selia hid," Caius answered. "He never found it."

Caius told him what Halvon had admitted about Selia. His father listened without interrupting, and, anger showed on his face when Caius explained how she had been left to die. I didn't want to go through every detail again. Hearing it once had been enough.

"And this man sat on the Council?" his father asked.

"For years," I said. "Sorin had no idea what he was doing."

Caius's father got up from the table and walked toward the window. I could understand why this bothered him. His own father had gone to great lengths to keep the Council away from Silvermere, only for Halvon to use his position to search for the same people. The danger had changed names, but not much else.

"I should have told Caius sooner," he said. "Even if I believed Silvermere was gone, I should have told him what my father told me."

Caius looked at him. "Yes, you should have."

His father turned back toward us. "I won't argue with that."

There was no anger in Caius's answer, but I knew him well enough to understand what sat beneath it. He had spent months finding pieces of history his own family had known something about. His father couldn't give him those months back. At least he wasn't trying to defend the choice now.

I reached beneath the table and took Caius's hand. His fingers closed around mine. I gave his hand a small squeeze, and he looked at me. The conversation had given us answers, but I didn't want it to become the only thing we remembered about this visit.

His father returned to his chair. "You have a lot waiting for you when you return."

“I know,” Caius answered.

His father looked at me. “And apparently a lot changing.”

I smiled because I knew he meant the baby. His reaction earlier had made it clear

Unclaimed Prizes Inside

Tap to claim your bonus before it’s gone.

ꟁutiu rity vVtimiųTHIC uu T|

“Nara has already decided she’s going to be the favorite aunt,” I said.

Caius sighed. “Of course she has.”

His father laughed. “You won’t stop her.”

“I know.”

“She also has several embarrassing stories about him,” I added.

Caius turned toward me. “How many did she tell you?”

“Not enough.”

“Isla.”

I smiled. “She promised me more later.”

His father laughed again. Caius didn’t look nearly as amused. I had spent less than a day with Nara and already understood why she enjoyed annoying him. I was beginning to enjoy it too.

‘We like her,’ Vaela said.

‘I know.’

‘She should visit us.’

I decided not to share that suggestion with Caius yet. He already knew Nara and I were getting along. Telling him Vaela had joined her side probably wouldn’t make him feel any better about it.

For a little while, Silvermere and Halvon felt farther away. This was why Caius had wanted to come here. He hadn't seen his father in more than two years, and I didn't want our entire visit to become another investigation.

Caius closed the wooden box and stood. His father told us there was something else he wanted to show us later, but it could wait. We had already learned more about Silvermere than Caius had expected when we came here.

"Are we safe to go back out there?" Caius asked.

His father smiled. "From Nara?"

"Yes."

"No."

Unclaimed Prizes Inside

Tap to claim your bonus before it's gone.

As we headed toward the doorway, Caius kept the box beneath his other arm. I looked at it once before turning my attention back to him. His grandfather had left something behind for the day

Silvermere returned to the Crown.

Somehow, that day had arrived with us.

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 354

One more day sla)

Points

Nara found us before we made it very far. She was standing with Maeve near one of the windows, and the moment she saw the box beneath Caius's arm, her attention went straight to it./Caius noticed and moved it farther from her reach. That only made her more interested.

"What is that?" Nara asked.

"Something that doesn't concern you," Caius answered.

Nara looked at me. “What is it?”

I smiled. “Something that doesn’t concern you.”

Caius looked pleased with my answer. Nara did not, but she eventually gave up when Maeve reminded her she’d promised to show me the grounds. Lyrienne was waiting nearby, and she joined us when we headed outside. Caius left the box with his father before following.

The land around the residence was beautiful. Trees covered much of the area beyond the house, with open fields between them and several smaller homes farther away. Wolves moved through the territory without paying much attention to us. I could understand why Caius had wanted to come back.

Nara walked beside me while Caius stayed a few steps behind with his father. Maeve and Lyrienne followed close enough to hear us. Nara had already told me two stories about Caius as a child, and neither made him look particularly impressive. I suspected that was why she had chosen them.

“He really did that?” I asked.

“He was fourteen,” Nara answered. “He thought he knew everything.”

“I did know everything.”

Nara looked back at him. “You got lost.”

“I took the wrong path.”

“For three hours.”

Caius looked at me. “There were several paths.”

I laughed and kept walking. I had never heard much about Caius as a child, and I liked hearing things that had nothing to do with being Alpha King. Nara knew a version of him that existed before the title and everything that came with it. I wanted to hear more.

One more day

We eventually reached a wide field behind the trees. Nara told me they used it for training when enough wolves were gathered here. Caius had apparently spent a lot of time there whenever he visited his father. I could picture him refusing to lose even then.

“You should come to Wraithbone sometime,” I said.

Nara stopped walking. “Are you inviting me?”

“Yes.”

Caius came closer. “Think carefully before you encourage her.”

Nara ignored him. “I’d love to come.”

Vaela was immediately pleased. I felt her move within me as Nara started asking when she could visit. Caius gave me a look that told me he knew exactly who was responsible for this. I smiled and pretended not to notice.

Maeve joined us while Nara continued talking. She told Nara to let us settle after the baby arrived before making plans to stay for weeks. Nara argued that she had never said anything about weeks. The look on Maeve’s face told me she knew her daughter too well to believe that.

I looked toward Lyrienne and found her watching us. She smiled when our eyes met, but I remembered what she’d told me before we came here. She couldn’t remain with us much longer.

Most of the extra time she’d promised me had already been spent.

I moved away from the others and went to her. “You still have to leave when we get back, don’t you?”

Lyrienne nodded. “I have one more day.”

I had known that already. Hearing it still made something inside me ache, but it wasn’t the same feeling I’d once had whenever someone left. Lyrienne wasn’t disappearing. I knew where she was going.

“Back to Frostvale?” I asked.

“Yes.”

I looked toward the trees. “I wish you could stay longer.”

“So do I.”

One more day

“I’ll come back,” Lyrienne said.

“You better.”

She smiled. “I don’t think Caius would let me miss the baby even if I tried.”

I looked over at him. “He’d probably send wolves to Frostvale to get you.”

“I heard that,” Caius called.

I turned toward him. “You were supposed to.”

My mother laughed beside me. I liked hearing it, especially after everything we’d spent our time discussing since finding each other. We had talked about Darius, Celestials, Varen, Halvon, and people who had died long before either of us could help them. I wanted memories with her that weren’t built around loss.

We stayed outside until Nara decided I hadn’t seen enough of the territory. She took us toward another part of the grounds while telling me about places Caius used to spend time. Caius corrected half of what she said. Nara accused him of trying to protect his reputation.

By the time we returned, I was hungry again. Caius noticed before I said anything and gave me a knowing look. I warned him not to make another comment about how much I ate. He raised both hands and wisely kept his mouth closed.

Maeve arranged for food while Nara continued questioning me about Wraithbone. She wanted to know about the pack house, the training grounds, and whether Caius behaved differently there. I told her he was exactly the same. Caius disagreed from where he was.

Later that evening, I sat beside Caius with Lyrienne nearby. His father and Maeve were talking while Nara tried to convince Caius that she should return to Wraithbone with us. He refused before she finished asking. She immediately turned to me for support.

“Don’t look at me,” I said. “I already invited you.”

Caius stared at me. “You did what?”

I smiled. “You were standing there.”

Nara laughed. “She’s definitely my favorite.”

Caius shook his head and looked at his father. Aldren only laughed, clearly unwilling to help him. I leaned against Caius and rested a hand over my stomach. Tomorrow we’d leave Scotland and return to Wraithbone.

After that, Lyrienne had one more day with me before she returned to Frostvale. I wasn her to leave, but this time I knew it wasn’t the end. She would come back when the baby

One more day closer to arriving. Until then, I still had tomorrow.

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 355

Back where we belong

Back where we belong aius)

We left Scotland the following morning. Nara complained about us leaving from the moment she came to see us off, though I suspected most of that was because Isla had invited her to Wraithbone. My father promised he'd visit once things settled. Maeve made Isla promise to send word about the baby.

Nara hugged Isla before coming to me. "I'll see you soon."

"That sounds like a threat."

"It is."

She hugged me anyway. I held her for a moment before letting her go. More than two years had been too long, and I knew I wouldn't let that much time pass again. Whatever distance existed between Wraithbone and Scotland didn't excuse it.

My father came to me next. "Take care of yourself."

"I will."

"And bring my grandchild here when the time comes."

I smiled. "You'll probably come to Wraithbone before then."

"Probably."

Maeve hugged me before saying goodbye to Isla and Lyrienne. Nara was still trying to convince Isla that she could visit within a few weeks. Isla wasn't helping by agreeing with her. I finally took Isla's hand and led her toward the vehicle.

The flight back was easier for Isla. She still watched everything during takeoff, but she didn't hold my hand the way she had before. Instead, she spent most of the flight asking Lyrienne questions about Frostvale. I listened without interrupting.

We reached Wraithbone later that day. Zeron was waiting when we arrived, with Raith and Lira nearby. Isla smiled the moment she saw them. I felt the change in her through our bond.

“Welcome back,” Zeron said.

“It’s good to be back,” Isla answered.

Zeron looked at me. “Your trip went well?”

“We found what we needed.”

+25 Points Pony

I told him we’d talk about it later. The box from my grandfather was with our belongings, and I wanted Pryor to see it when he returned. There was also the matter of getting the message to ara. None of it needed to happen before Isla rested.

Lyrienne remained beside Isla as we entered the pack house. She would leave for Frostvale tomorrow, and I knew Isla was thinking about it even if she wasn’t saying anything. The two of them had lost too many years already. A few days together would never feel like enough.

Sera appeared before we’d been back very long. She looked at me first, which didn’t surprise me Apparently being cleared to travel hadn’t stopped her from believing I might somehow injure myself while sitting on a plane. Then her attention moved to Isla.

“How are you feeling?” Sera asked.

“Hungry.”

I looked away before Isla caught me smiling. Sera noticed and gave me a look that told me not to comment. I had already learned that lesson in Scotland. There were some battles an Alpha King knew better than to start.

Sera checked Isla before allowing either of us to go anywhere. The baby was fine, and Isla was doing well after the journey. Vaela had been more active since we’d entered Wraithbone. Vorak had noticed it too.

‘They’re home,’ he said.

‘So are we.’

I understood what he meant. Scotland had been good, and seeing my father again had reminded me of how much I’d missed. But Wraithbone was ours. This was where Isla and I had built our life.

Zeron found me after Sera finished. I left Isla with Lyrienne and followed him into my office. Several reports were waiting on my desk. I knew before sitting down that the peace from Scotland was over.

“Sorin sent word,” Zeron said.

I looked at him. “When?”

“This morning.”

He handed me the message. Pryor had finished organizing most of the evidence against Halvon, including the statements taken before we left. Sorin wanted the final judgment handled as soon as possible. I agreed.

“What about Kael?” I asked.

Back where we belong

“Still confined.”

“And Renn?”

“Everything we have on him has been added to the record.”

I placed the message on my desk. There was no reason to delay any of it. Halvon had given us the answers we’d needed from him. Keeping him alive longer served no purpose.

“Tell Sorin we’ll be ready,” I said.

Zeron nodded. “Tomorrow?”

I thought about Lyrienne. Tomorrow was her final day with Isla before she returned to Frostvale.

wasn’t taking that away from either of them for Halvon.

“The day after.”

Zeron understood immediately. “I’ll send word.”

He left me alone with the reports. I read through enough to know nothing had happened while we were gone that required immediate action. Halvon remained guarded. Wraithbone had stayed peaceful.

I returned to Isla later and found her with Lyrienne. They were sitting together talking, and Isla looked happier than she had when we’d first discussed her mother’s departure. I didn’t interrupt them immediately. Tomorrow belonged to them.

Isla eventually noticed me. “Are you going to stand there all day?”

“I was considering it.”

“Come here.”

I went to her and sat beside her. She took my hand while Lyrienne smiled at us. I told them about

Sorin’s message and that Halvon’s judgment would happen the day after Lyrienne left.

“Good,” Isla said.

Lyrienne looked at her. “Are you ready for it?”

Isla was quiet for a moment. “I’m ready for it to be over.”

I understood. So was I. Halvon had taken enough from people who never deserved what he’d done to them.

Tomorrow Lurie

Back where we belong

My hand moved to her stomach.

Qur child was part of that future.

princess jody

I can’t believe I’m saying this, but we only have five chapters left before The Alpha King and His Chosen Luna officially comes to an end. We’ve been through so much with Isla and Caius, and I’m not ready to say goodbye to them yet. Thank you for staying with them through this entire journey.

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 356

Until you come back sla)

I woke the next morning before Caius. For a few moments, I stayed beside him and remembered what day it was. Lyrienne would leave before evening, and I had already decided I wasn’t spending our remaining time being sad about it. I had my mother back, and today I wanted to enjoy her.

Caius opened his eyes and found me looking at him. “You’re awake early.”

“I have plans.”

“Should I be worried?”

I smiled. “Probably.”

He sat up and watched me leave the bed. I told him I planned to spend most of the day with Lyrienne and that he wasn’t invited unless we decided otherwise. He looked offended, but I knew he wasn’t. He understood why today mattered.

I found Lyrienne eating when I joined her. She looked surprised to see me so early, then pushed another plate toward the empty place beside her. I sat and immediately reached for the food. Pregnancy had made breakfast feel necessary within minutes of waking.

“I thought we’d spend today together,” I said.

“I was hoping you would.”

“We’re not discussing Halvon.”

“Agreed.”

I didn’t want our final hours filled with him or anyone else from the past. There would be enough time for Halvon tomorrow. Today belonged to my mother and me. We started by walking through

Wraithbone.

I showed her places we hadn’t visited during her stay. We passed the training grounds and several wolves greeted us as we went. Some stopped to speak with Lyrienne because they hadn’t gotten the chance before. She seemed surprised by how easily they accepted her.

“They love you,” she said.

“They’re my pack.”

“I can see that.”

belong anywhere. Wraithbone had changed that long before I understood everything about myself. Now I couldn’t imagine calling anywhere else home.

eventually reached the place where Caius had first brought me into the territory. I stopped there without planning to. Lyrienne noticed me looking around and waited. I

remembered arriving here after Ashcrest and feeling the land recognize me beneath my feet.

“This is where Wraithbone accepted me,” I said.

Lyrienne looked around. “I wish I could have seen it.”

“I didn’t expect it to happen.”

“You couldn’t have.”

She was right. I had known I was Celestial, but I hadn’t expected Wraithbone to recognize me the way it had. The land had accepted me, and the wolves had bowed without anyone telling them to. rested my hand against my stomach and wondered what this land would think of our child.

Vaela moved within me. ‘She belongs here too.

I smiled. ‘Of course she does.’

Lyrienne glanced at me. “Vaela?”

“She has opinions about everything.”

“That hasn’t changed.”

I laughed because my mother remembered Vaela from before I could. There were still pieces of my childhood that Lyrienne carried for me. I wanted to hear every one eventually. We had time for that now.

We returned to the pack house for lunch, and Caius joined us. He behaved himself and didn’t mention how much food I put on my plate. I noticed him glance at it once before looking elsewhere. Lyrienne noticed too.

“Smart man,” she said.

“I learn quickly.”

Until you come back

Caius left us alone again. He had work waiting, and I knew he was also giving us time without saying so.

The hours passed much faster than I wanted. Lyrienne had already packed before morning, so there was nothing left to delay when it was time for her to go. Caius came

with me to see her off. Zeron had arranged wolves to travel with her until she reached Frostvale safely.

I hugged my mother and didn't let go immediately. She held me just as firmly. This wasn't the goodbye we'd had when I was a child. Neither of us was being taken from the other.

"I'll be back before you know it," Lyrienne said.

"You said you'll come before the baby arrives."

"I will."

"I'm holding you to that."

She smiled. "I wouldn't miss it."

I hugged her once more. When I finally released her, she placed her hand against my stomach for a moment. My child moved beneath her hand. Lyrienne's eyes widened.

"She moved."

"She knows her grandmother is leaving."

"Then tell her I'm coming back."

I smiled. "You can tell her yourself."

Lyrienne bent closer to my stomach. "I'm coming back, little one."

The baby moved again. My mother laughed and covered her mouth with one hand. I looked at Caius and found him watching us.

Lyrienne finally stepped away. She promised again that she'd return and then left with the wolves waiting for her. I watched until I could no longer see them. Caius stayed beside me the entire time.

"You all right?" he asked.

"I will be."

He took my hand. I missed her already, but I wasn't afraid. Frostvale wasn't some unknown place, and my mother wasn't gone. She was simply going home until it was time to return.

I turned back toward the pack house with Caius beside me. Tomorrow would bring Sorin Prvor, and Halvon's final judgment. I had spent east

Until you come back what happened to me. Halvon would not have another day after tomorrow.

Then we could move forward.

Point

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 357

No more chances

(Caius)

Sorin and Pryor arrived the following morning. Zeron brought them to my office while Raith went to have Halvon brought from the room where he'd been kept. Isla came with me, and I didn't ask whether she wanted to attend. She had as much right to be there as anyone.

Pryor placed several records on my desk. "Everything is here."

"Including Renn and Kael?"

"Everything connected to Halvon."

Sorim remained standing beside him. "There is enough here that no member of the Council can question the judgment."

I didn't care whether they questioned it. Halvon had admitted what he'd done, and the evidence supported every important part of his confession. Selia alone would have been enough for me. Trying to kill me had only added to what was already waiting for him.

We moved to the meeting room where Halvon's judgment would take place. Zeron and Raith were already there when we entered. Orin stood near the far end of the table. He had asked to attend, and I hadn't refused him.

Halvon was brought in a few minutes later. His hands were bound, and two Wraithbone warriors remained with him. He looked around the room before his attention settled on me. There was no fear on his face.

Sorin opened the record and began reading the charges. He named Selia, the hidden records, Renn, Kael, the information taken from Wraithbone, and the attack against me. Halvon listened without interrupting. Isla sat beside me and watched him.

When Sorin finished, he closed the record. “Do you deny any of it?”

“No.”

“Do you have anything to add before judgment is given?”

“No.”

I had expected more from him. Another excuse about his father, perhaps, or another attempt to convince us that Celestials needed to be controlled. Instead, he sat there as though he’d already accepted what was coming. Maybe he had.

Orin stepped forward. “What about Selia?”

Halvon looked at him. “What about her?”

“Her body.”

Halvon’s expression changed. “I told you where I left her.”

“You told us the area.”

No more chames.

Halvon looked away. “That’s all I remember”

Orin stared at him for several seconds before moving back. I knew he wanted more, but Halvon had already been questioned about Selia. There was nothing left to gain by doing it again.

Pryor opened another record “Search teams will continue until she’s found.”

Orin nodded. “Bring her home.”

“We will.”

25 Pors

That was all Orin asked. Seventeen years of questions had finally given him somewhere to look. It wasn’t enough, but it was more than he’d had before Halvon was exposed.

Sorim turned toward me. “The Council recognizes the evidence presented against Halvon and accepts the authority of the Crown to issue final judgment.”

Halvon looked at me. “So this is it.”

“Yes.”

His eyes moved briefly toward Isla. “And you?”

Isla didn’t move. “What about me?”

“Do you want me dead too?”

Isla watched him for a moment. “I want you unable to hurt anyone else.”

Halvon gave a short laugh. “Careful answer.”

“No. It’s the truth.”

I looked at Halvon before he could say anything else. He’d spent enough time trying to make Isla’s existence about what men like him believed she should be. He wasn’t getting another chance. This judgment belonged to his actions.

I stood. “Halvon, you used your Council position to hide crime’s committed against Celestials and those who protected them.”

He kept his eyes on me. I continued through the crimes that had been proven, including Selia’s a******* and what he’d done to Wraithbone. I didn’t mention his father as an excuse. Halvon had made his own decisions.

“You also entered Wraithbone under false pretenses and attempted to kill your king with wolfsbane.” I said

“I remember.”

“Then you understand the judgment.”

“I already did.”

I didn’t draw it out. There was no reason to turn his death into something greater than it was. Halvon had known the punishment before Sorin arrived. Now the Council knew it too.

Your sentence is death.”

Halvon didn’t react. The warriors behind him waited for my order. Isla’s hand rested on the table beside mine. I looked at Zeron

‘Take him to the Crown execution grounds. The sentence will be carried out there.”

Zeron nodded. “I’ll arrange the escort.

Halvon stood before either warrior reached for him. He looked toward Orin once, but Orin nothing. Then his attention moved to Isla.

gave him

“You think this ends with me?” Halvon asked.

‘It ends your part in it,” Isla answered.

The warriors led him from the room. Zeron and Raith followed to arrange the escort that would take him to the execution grounds. I didn’t go with them. I had already given Halvon more of my time than he deserved.

Pryor gathered the records once the door closed. His copy of the judgment would travel with Halvon and return after the sentence had been carried out. There would be witnesses and a formal record. No one would ever question what had happened to him.

“What happens to his position?” Isla asked.

“It remains empty until the Council chooses someone,” Sorin answered.

“Choose better this time.”

Sorin accepted that without argument. “We will.”

I looked at Pryor. “And Kael?”

“His case is next.”

That would be handled separately. Kael had betrayed Wraithbone, but he wasn’t Halvon. His punishment would answer what he’d actually done, not crimes belonging to someone else.

Orin remained near the table. Halvon’s departure hadn’t changed his expression. There was still one thing he wanted that Halvon’s death couldn’t give him. Selia still needed to be found.

“We’ll keep searching,” I told him.

Orin looked at me. “That’s all I ask.”

Sorin and Pryor remained with us while we discussed what would happen next. The Council had records to correct and decisions to make after everything Halvon had hidden. Kael still needed to answer for betraying Wraithbone. Renn’s part in everything also had to be entered into the final record.

Halvon was no longer part of those decisions. His judgment had been given. By the time the official confirmation returned, his sentence would have been carried out. He would leave Wraithbone alive, but he would never return.

Tomorrow we would deal with what remained.

No wope that

Then we would close the past.

Samments

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 358

What remained

What remained

(Caius)

The following morning, Pryor returned to my office with Sorin. Isla was already with me, and Zeron stood near the door waiting for the others, Halvon had been taken from Wraithbone before sunrise. The escort would reach the Crown execution grounds later that day.

Pryor placed a record in front of me. “This is Kael’s case.”

I opened it and read through the pages. Eight months of information had passed from Kael to Renn before reaching Halvon. Some of it had been ordinary pack information, but that didn’t change what Kael had done. He had known Renn had no right to any of it.

“Bring him in,” I said.

Zeron left and returned with Kael several minutes later. Two warriors came behind him, but Kael wasn’t bound. He had been confined since we learned the truth. He stopped across from my desk and lowered his head.

“Look at me,” I said.

Kael raised his head. “My King.”

“You admitted giving information to Renn.”

“Yes.”

“You did it for eight months.”

“Yes.”

I closed the record. “Why?”

Kael swallowed. “At the beginning, I didn’t think the things he asked mattered.”

“And later?”

“I knew they did.”

That answer mattered more than whatever excuse he could have given me. Kael hadn’t been fooled for eight months. At some point, he had understood that Renn wanted information he shouldn’t have. Kael had continued giving it to him anyway.

“Did Renn pay you?” I asked.

“No.”

“Threaten you?”

“No.”

“Then you made the choice yourself.”

What rema

Kael lowered his eyes. “Yes.”

Isla had said nothing since he entered. I knew she remembered him from the training grounds, and I knew what Vorak remembered too. That wasn’t why Kael stood in front of me now. What mattered was that a Wraithbone warrior had betrayed his own pack.

pushed the record toward Pryor. “Kael is stripped of his position as a Wraithbone warrior.”

Kael looked at me again. “I understand.”

“You will be exiled from Wraithbone. You will not enter this territory again unless the Crown gives you permission.”

His face changed, but he nodded. “Yes, My King.”

“Your betrayal will remain on your record. Any pack you ask to join will know exactly why you were removed from this one.”

“I understand.”

I watched him for another moment. “You leave tomorrow.”

Kael lowered his head. “Thank you for not giving me Halvon’s punishment.”

“You didn’t commit Halvon’s crimes.”

“No.”

“But don’t mistake that for forgiveness.”

“I won’t.”

I looked at Zeron. “Take him.”

Zeron escorted Kael from the office. I felt nothing watching him leave. He had been given a place in Wraithbone and trusted with its safety. He had thrown that away himself.

Pryor turned to the next record. “Renn.”

“There is no judgment left to give him,” Sorin said.

“No, but there is a record to correct.”

Pryor opened the file and began going through the changes. Renn’s connection to Elena’s mother would remain separate from the work he later did for Halvon. The dates would show that he hadn’t been working for Halvon when Elena’s mother first found him. Everything he did afterward would be recorded under Halvon’s investigation.

“Do it,” I said.

Pryor nodded. “It will be entered when I return to the Council.”

Sorin placed another document beside it. Halvon’s name had appeared across years of Council decisions and records. Anything connected to the crimes he had hidden would now be reviewed. They couldn’t change what had happened, but they could stop his lies from remaining as truth.

What remained.

Isla looked at Sorin. “And the Celestial records?

“They’ll be corrected too.”

“All of them?”

“Every one we can prove was changed or hidden.”

Ista nodded. “Good.”

There was one final matter on my desk. I opened the wooden box my father had given me in Scotland and removed my grandfather’s message. The metal disk rested beneath it. I had already decided where both belonged.

“These need to go to Silvermere,” I said.

Isla looked at the disk. “To Elara.”

“Yes.”

Orin had joined us before we began discussing Silvermere. He came closer when he saw the divided circle. His eyes remained on it for several seconds. He still didn’t reach for it.

“The Keeper should have both,” Orin said.

“She will.”

I placed the message back inside the box. A Crown escort would take it to Silvermere with instructions that it be placed directly into Elara’s hands. My grandfather had protected that place without seeking recognition for it. I wasn’t going to turn what he’d left behind into another Council possession.

Sorin understood without needing an explanation. “Silvermere’s protection remains untouched.”

“It remains outside Council control,” I said.

“Agreed.”

Isla reached for my hand once the box was closed. We had spent months finding pieces left behind by people who believed Celestials were something to fear or own. Halvon had been the last man still trying to continue that belief. Now his records were being corrected, Kael had received his punishment, and Silvermere would remain protected.

Pryor gathered the files. “I’ll leave for the Council tomorrow.”

Sorin stood. “I’ll go with him.”

I nodded. “Send confirmation when every correction is entered.”

“You’ll have it.”

They left my office a few minutes later. Orin went with them, wanting to speak with Pryor about the search for Selia before they departed. Isla remained beside me. There was one more set of reports I hadn’t shown her yet.

They had nothing to do with Halvon.

They came from Ashcrest

Somments

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 359

What Ashcrest became

What Ashcrest became

(Caius)

Isla looked at the reports after everyone left. I had already read them twice, and there was more in them than I’d expected. The first pages weren’t about Derek, Helene, or any of the others. They were about Ashcrest.

“What happened?” Isla asked.

“Nothing bad.”

She looked at me. “Then why do you have that look on your face?”

“Because Ashcrest has changed.”

I opened the first report. The three wolves I’d appointed before we left were still leading the pack under Crown supervision. Every report required of them had been submitted, and there had been no attempt to return to the way things had been under Rodan. Ashcrest was becoming something different.

“They’re still leading the pack?” Isla asked.

“All three of them.”

“And it’s working?”

“Better than I expected.”

Several families who had considered leaving had chosen to stay. The three leaders had changed how complaints were handled and made it possible for any wolf to report mistreatment without going through someone of higher rank. The reports showed no serious problems since we’d left.

Isla sat across from me.

“So they’re actually rebuilding.”

“They are.”

I turned another page. “There’s something else.”

“What?”

“They did something with the place where the shack stood.”

Her expression changed immediately.

I remembered giving the order to destroy that shack. I’d wanted nothing left of the place where isla had been chained and poisoned. Once she was free, there had been no reason for it to remain standing. Now something entirely different stood on the same ground.

“What did they do?” she asked.

“They made it into a memorial.”

What Ashcrest besame

Isla stared at me.

“The three leaders decided to do it. They started working on it months ago, and it’s finished now.”

“What kind of memorial?”

“A garden.”

She didn’t speak.

“They planted flowers around the area where the shack stood. There’s a stone in the center with your name on it and words acknowledging what happened there.”

“My name?”

“Yes”

I slid the report toward her, but she didn’t reach for it. The memorial didn’t place all the blame on Rodan. It acknowledged that Ashcrest had failed Isla because too many wolves had known something was wrong and had chosen to do nothing.

“They want the younger wolves to know what happened,” I said. “They don’t want that part of Ashcrest’s history hidden.”

Isla looked at the report.

“They sent a message for you too.”

“I don’t know if I want to hear it.”

“You don’t have to.”

She thought about it. “Tell me.”

“They’re asking you to forgive them.”

Her expression didn’t change.

“They also want you to visit someday. They want you to see what Ashcrest has become.”

Isla looked at me. “They want me to come back for that?”

“Yes.”

“Then they’ll be waiting a long time.”

“I thought you’d say that.”

“I’ve already gone back when I had a reason to,” she said. “I don’t need to return just to see whether they’ve changed.”

“You don’t.”

She looked at the report again.

“I’m glad they’re rebuilding,” she said. “I’m glad the wolves there are trying to make Ashcrest better.”

What Ashcrest besame

“But you don’t need to see it for yourself.”

“No. Whatever Ashcrest becomes now is for the wolves who still live there.”

I closed the report. She wasn’t rejecting what they’d done. She simply didn’t need to be part of what came next for them.

“What about Derek and the others?” she asked.

“They haven’t caused any problems.”

“Derek and Helene?”

“They’re still in Greyhaven.”

There had been no reports of trouble from either of them. Their sentences remained in place, and nothing had happened that required intervention. They had kept to themselves since the last time we’d seen them there.

“And Vera and Cole?”

“They’re following their sentences too.”

“Have they found somewhere to settle?”

“Not permanently.”

They had approached other packs, but their records followed them. Once the Alphas learned who they were and what their part had been in everything that happened at Ashcrest, they had been unwilling to accept them permanently. Neither Vera nor Cole had caused trouble because of it.

“They were turned away?” Isla asked.

“More than once.”

She looked down at her hands.

“I grew up with them.”

“I know.”

“Sometimes I wish things had been different,” she said.

I waited.

“Not because I want them back. I just wish they’d made different choices.”

I understood. Learning the truth about where she came from couldn’t erase the years when she’d believed those people were her family. There had been a child who wanted them to love her long before she understood why they didn’t.

I reached for another report.

“Maren is different.”

What Ashcreat besame

Isla looked up. “What happened?”

“She hasn’t been doing well since Rodan was executed.”

“The mate bond?”

“The healer believes losing it affected her badly.”

Maren wasn’t eating properly unless someone remained with her. At times she became confused and asked for Rodan as though she’d forgotten he was dead. Someone now stayed with her because she couldn’t be left alone for long periods.

“Does she know he’s dead?” Isla asked.

“Most of the time.”

She looked away.

“I don’t feel sorry for her,” she said.

“I know.”

“But I don’t like hearing that either.”

“You don’t have to.”

She nodded, and I put Maren’s report aside.

“Pryor included an update on Brent and Dara too.”

That got her attention.

“Is Brent still following the conditions?”

“Every one.”

He continued reporting each month. He hadn’t left the permitted area without authorization, and there had been no contact with anyone from Ashcrest. He was still working at the trade yard.

“And Dara?”

“Still with him. She’s still helping at the healer’s house.”

“Good.”

I put the final report down. Islą looked at the papers between us before placing a hand over our daughter. A moment later, the baby moved beneath her palm.

“She’ll never have to wonder if her family loves her,” Isla said.

“Never.”

“She’ll never have to earn her place with us.”

“She already has it.”

What Ashcrest besame

Isla looked at the Ashcrest report one last time.

“They can keep the memorial,” she said. “Maybe they need it.”

I watched her.

“But I don’t.”

She stood and came around the desk. I took her hand when she reached me, and we left the reports where they were.

Ashcrest could remember what happened to Isla.

Whatever it became now belonged to the wolves who still called it home.

The past find

The Alpha King And His Chosen Luna

Chapter 360

The past is finished

(Caius)

We left the office and found Zeron waiting in the corridor. He had a folded message in one hand and gave it to me as soon as we reached him. I opened it while Isla remained beside me. The confirmation from the Crown execution grounds had arrived.

“Halvon?” Isla asked.

“Yes.”

She watched me read it. The escort had reached the grounds without trouble, Pryor’s copy of the judgment had been accepted, and Halvon’s sentence had been carried out. His death had been entered into the Crown record.

“It’s done,” I said.

Isla released a breath. “All of it?”

“All’of it.”

I handed the message back to Zeron and told him to place it with the other records. There was nothing else I needed from Halvon now. He had given us the answers he had, and the rest of what he’d done would remain documented. His name would never disappear simply because he was dead.

Zeron left us, and Isla continued walking with me. We reached the main part of the pack house where several wolves passed us on their way outside. Each of them bowed before continuing. Isla barely seemed to notice anymore.

“Do you know what I want?” she asked.

“What?”

“Food.”

I looked at her. “Of course.”

She gave me a look. “I’m pregnant.”

“I’ve noticed.”

Her hand went to her stomach as the baby moved again. Isla stopped walking and looked down at herself. I felt the movement through the bond before she reached for my hand. She placed my palm over the place where the baby had moved.

“There,” she said.

I waited, and another movement pressed against my hand. Vorak became alert inside me at once. He had been doing that more often as the pregnancy progressed. Anything involving our child got his full attention.

‘Our pup, he said.

1 know isla looked up at me. “He’s doing it again, isn’t he?”

“Yes”

“What did he say?

“That it’s our pup.”

Isla smiled, “Vaela says he reminds her several times a day.”

“Vorak doesn’t care

“I know,”

We continued toward the dining room. Lunch had already been prepared, and Isla changed her mind twice before deciding what she wanted. I didn’t comment on it. The last time I had, she’d taken food from my plate and told me it was punishment.

We had barely sat when Sera entered. She looked at Isla first and then at the plate in front of her. Isla immediately pointed at me. I hadn’t said anything.

“I didn’t call her,” I said.

“You were thinking about it.”

“That isn’t a crime.”

“It should be.”

Sera came closer and pulled out a chair. “How has she been today?”

Isla looked offended. “I’m sitting right here.”

“I can see that.”

I leaned back and let them continue. Sera had already checked on Isla, but that had never stopped her from asking questions later. The closer we got to the birth, the more often she checked on both Isla and the baby.

“The baby has been moving a lot, Isla said.

“Any pain?”

“No.”

“Anything different?”

The baby’s reacting more when Caius touches me.”

Sera looked at me before returning her attention to Isla. “That’s been happening for weeks.”

“It’s stronger now”

That was true. Our baby responded to my voice and my touch, and even to Vorak when he came close through the bond. Sometimes Isla said Vaela reacted at the same moment. Whatever existed between the four of us seemed to be growing as the pregnancy continued.

Sera asked a few more questions before letting Isla eat. I stayed out of it until she finished. Isla had been feeling good, but I knew that could change as the pregnancy continued. I wanted Sera close when it did

After lunch, we went outside. The weather had turned colder since we’d returned from Scotland, and Isle pulled her coat closer around herself. Her stomach was more visible now than it had been when we’d left Aldren’s home. I found myself looking at it more than I meant to.

“You keep staring at me,” she said.

“I’m looking at the baby.”

“The baby is inside me.”

“I’m aware.”

She laughed and took my hand. We walked toward the trees without going far from the pack house. Isla tired more easily now, though she hated when anyone pointed it out. I had learned to turn around before she needed to ask.

“When do you think my mother will come back?” she asked.

“She said before the birth.”

“I know.”

“You miss her.”

“Yes.”

I squeezed her hand. Lyrienne had been gone only a short time, but Isla had become used to having her mother near. After everything it had taken for them to find each other, I understood why even a temporary separation mattered.

“She’ll come back,” I said.

“I know she will.”

We stopped near the trees. Isla rested both hands over her stomach and looked toward Wraithbone territory around us. Ashcrest had occupied so much of her life, but there was nothing waiting for her there anymore. Everything she wanted was here.

“I think I’m ready now,” she said.

“For what?”

“For things to be normal.”

I looked at her.

“No more hidden records. No more people trying to control Celestials. No more finding out someone else has been lying to us.”

The past is shed

“I’d like that.”

She smiled at me. “Just us for a while.”

I brought her hand to my lips. The baby moved again, and Isla laughed as she placed my hand over her stomach. Vorak reacted immediately, making his presence known through the bond.

There would still be Crown business, Council matters, and problems that came with ruling. None of that disappeared because our enemies were gone. But there was nothing waiting behind us that demanded Isla turn around. We could finally look ahead.

Our baby moved beneath my hand again.

And that was exactly where I intended to keep looking.

The day alives-