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CHAPTER 26

DECLAN

It's been over a week of hell, pulling all-nighters and most of my hair out. At one point, I almost had a heart attack when one of my warriors found a dead she wolf in the next town over, only to find out that it was some rogue. Not to sound insensitive, but I thanked the Goddess that it wasn't Quinn.

Gavin has been helping in the search for Quinn as well. Working side by side with him isn't really what I want to be doing, but if it will help bring Quinn home, then I'll deal with him. He seems to actually care for her, which is very surprising, but it's not like it makes a difference on how I feel about him being around Quinn. He still has a damaging past, and I don't want our young Alpha anywhere near that, or him.

"Has anyone been watching the Desert Sand pack?" Gavin asks.

I'm in the middle of going through video feed that I happened to get from all the surrounding towns that had video from the day of Lila's Luna Ceremony. We haven't had any luck anywhere. It's not like she could just disappear off the face of the earth, right?

I scrub my hand down my face as I sit back in my office chair, "Yes, it's the first place that I sent my men. I have a few scoping out that pack and a few other unsavory packs."

"Good, good." It's all my cousin says for now as he goes back to watching his portion of the video feed. After about ten minutes, Gavin suddenly jumps up. "That Luna ***of yours has to know something! I'm going to go get it out of her!" He marches for the door, but I stop him.

"You will do no such thing! You got away with backhanding her once, but you forget that she is carrying my pup and heir. As much as we both want to strangle her, we still have to be careful." I lecture. It's true, though, I feel the same way he does, and we may be wrong, but how are we supposed to know if we can't torture it out of her? I've used my Alpha aura on her, but now that she's my Luna, she can fight it.

“There are other ways to torture a woman without hurting her pup, cousin.”
Gavin states cynically

“We will do no such thing, Gavin!” I growl. “That is not how we treat women in my pack, whether they are guilty or not. Unless it is consensual, there will be none of that kind of abuse.”

Gavin rolls his eyes, “You are too soft, Declan! It’s probably why, Quinn got taken under your watch.’ He mumbles under his breath, but I hear him plain as day.

In seconds, I have my cousin pinned against the wall by his throat, both my claws and my fangs are out as Duke lurks near the surface, “You want to try saying that a little louder? That way, others will hear you and I will be justified in beating your pathetic *****!” i sneer, my fangs dripping with saliva.

*Calm down. Declan. I apologize, I was way out of line.” I glare at him a moment longer before releasing him.

Turning back to my desk, i mind link my Beta and Head Warrior, Keenan, to come to my office right away. Glancing over my shoulder, I address my cousin, “I’ll be sending a few of my best men out to meet with the Alphas of these packs. If they are hiding something, it will be known.”

“Okay, and what...?”

“Well, Gavin, if you want to help, then we are going to need some more warriors to go with in case there is an attack. Do you think you can handle rounding up some more men?” I ask sarcastically. Sometimes I wonder how we became related. I’m thinking Aunt Sara dropped him on his head one too many times as a pup.

There is a knock on my door, so I call out for whoever it is to enter. My mom pops her head through the door. “Hey, I hate to bother you, but I thought I had better remind you that Lila’s doctor’s appointment is this afternoon.”

“And?” I raise a brow at her.

“I thought you would want to go and talk to the doctor in case you had any questions.”

pinch the bridge of my nose, “***, I can’t pause what I’m doing, Mother. Quinn needs us.”

My mom has concern in her eyes when I mention Quinn’s name, but she is still persistent. “I know, Declan, but your pup needs you too.”

I sigh, knowing that she’s right, but my pup isn’t in immediate danger. Knowing my mother though, she will not let up on this. ***Lila and this whole pregnancy ***!

“Fine! I will go, but I swear to Goddess, if I miss something and it has an effect on getting Quinn back, both you and Lila will go live together on the outskirts of town!” I threaten.

She rolls her eyes at me. “Don’t be so dramatic, son.”

“Dramatic?” I stand and let out my aura on my own mother, “I understand that this is your grand pup, but I thought you had thought of Quinn as your own daughter? How can you think light of her kidnapping?”

*Please, Declan... My mother’s neck is down and bared to me.

I pull my aura back instantly. “I’m sorry, Mother. I’m just worried for Quinn. We don’t know what is happening to her!”

* know this! I’m sorry if I sound like I don’t care, but in actuality, I’m frightened for our poor girl. I’m only trying to keep myself from going insane by continuing with the everyday tasks.” She ***.

I go to her and wrap my arms around her, “We are going to get her back, Mom. I don’t care if we have to tear every pack from here to the coastline down, we will bring her home.” I rub her back as I console her, “Let me update my Beta and Head Warrior with my plans and then I’ll take Lila over to see the doctor.”

“I’m sorry, you’re right. You shouldn’t be bothered with doctor stuff right now. I can take her.” My mom sniffs back her runny nose.

“No. It’s my responsibility, so I will do it. It shouldn’t take all too long.”

“Alright, if you say so.” She looks up at me.

"I do. Now, go and tell her to get ready and I will come get her." I kiss my mother's forehead before releasing her and watching her leave the room.

"You're getting soft, Declan." My cousin thinks he needs to put his two cents in, "I wouldn't have caved. The she-***let herself get pregnant, so you shouldn't have to worry yourself with this trivial ****."

"Really, Gav? Why do you have to be such a ***?" He doesn't answer because Carter and Keenan show up just as I ask him.

"Alpha, you wanted to see us?" Keenan asks.

"Yes, come in," I wait for them to find a seat and sit down, "I'll be sending our best men in to meet with each of the Alpha's that we have been watching. Just because we haven't seen her, doesn't mean she isn't locked away somewhere."

"What are we supposed to do if they deny having her?" Carter asks.

"It's going to be your job to decipher whether or not they are telling the truth. It shouldn't be too hard. Once you find out who has her, then I will come and meet you, and we will go in together."

"Okay, but there is only one pack that I would pay close attention to, and I think we all know which one that is." Carter states.

"Desert Sand, we all say in Unison."

"I will get my father to see about sending a team to the two packs closest to us." Gavin informs us, and I nod.

"Thank you." It leaves a sour taste in my mouth, but I am grateful for his help in this. I turn back to my Beta. "Carter, rally up the groups we want to send, and I will meet with all of you before you head out. I have a **doctor's appointment to go to." I growl.

UPAULA AURAAVAAVAA

Lila sits beside me at the clinic, happy as can be with one hand on her stomach and the other one itching for me to take, but I don't. In fact, I move it farther away. What's it going to take for this she-wolf to understand that we

are not the typical mated couple? I will never be with her intimately again, and yet she has such high hopes no matter how badly I treat her.

“Alpha Declan and Luna Lila.” The nurse calls out our names and everyone turns our way.

Lila jumps up and hurries over to the nurse, smiling broadly, “Oh, I can’t wait to hear the heartbeat today!” the nurse smiles back warmly as she waits for me to catch up because I’m dragging my feet as much as I can.

As soon as we get into the examination room, the nurse begins to ask Lila a bunch of questions about her health and her diet. I’m *** bored all ready. It isn’t until the doctor comes in when I start to perk up a little, not that I’m excited, but maybe I’m hoping he will say he made a mistake, and that Lila isn’t pregnant.

“Lila, how are you? How’s the pup?” He smiles warmly at my Luna.

“I’m doing great, Peter, and the pup is doing just as well. I’ve had no issues as of yet.” The Luna smiles brightly.

I watch the exchange between the two, finding it weird that they are on a first name basis, but then Dr. Langly turns to me.

* Alpha, I bet you’re excited to have an heir, aren’t you?” He says, but his smile towards me doesn’t look as genuine as it does when he talks to Lila.

“What Alpha wouldn’t be excited about having an heir? i’d be more excited if I were having a pup with my own mate, though.” I glare at Lila, but it doesn’t seem to faze her.

My phone pings with an incoming text and so I pull it out and look at my message. I haven’t even left the room, and the doctor is asking Lila if she feels safe living at the pack house and wanting to know if she is abused.

“Oh, I’m perfectly fine living with the Alpha. It’s true that he is always busy and tends to neglect his new Luna, but I’m not being abused.” She grins and actually bats her ***eyes at the doctor.

Un-***-believable! I’m sitting right here and this she-*, who is carrying my pup, is ***flirting with the doctor! I couldn’t care less who she flirts with when she

isn't in my presence or carrying my pup, but I'll be *** if I allow her to make a fool out of me like this.

I clear my throat, "Unless you want to find another job in another pack, Dr. Langly, I suggest you stop enabling the Luna to flirt with you. You are not the first for her and will never be the last, because a *" The good doctor does not like the words I use about his patient, and I don't give a **, "We are here for a prenatal checkup and so I suggest you get to it. I am a remarkably busy man, doctor."

"Yes, Alpha, my apologies." He quickly sets up the monitor and instructs Lila to lay back. He then squirts some kind of lube on her abdomen and uses a wand that is connected to the machine to look at the pup. He presses button after button until finally he says something. "The pup is measuring right on time. It's too soon to see the sex, but we should be able to next visit. Would you like to hear the heartbeat?"

"Oh, yes, of course!" Lila claps in excitement.

I roll my eyes but sit and wait. When the thumping begins, I thought I would react differently, maybe feel a little excited, but I don't. Sheer boredom is all I'm feeling right now. Both Lila and the doctor, however, are ecstatic, until they see me eying them both.

"Sorry, Alpha," the doctor clears his throat, "I always get carried away when one of my patients is carrying a pup and we hear the heartbeat for the first time."

I don't remember asking him, but whatever, "So, the pup is healthy, correct? Does Lila have any restrictions that I should be aware of?"

The doctor grins, "The pup is strong and healthy, Alpha. As for Lila, as long as she takes her prenatal vitamins and doesn't become too stressed out, she should be fine," I notice a little flinch when he continues, "It will be perfectly fine for the Luna to meet your needs, Alpha."

"What do you mean by that?" I'm quite sure I know, but I don't remember asking, which only means one other person would have, and I send her a glare.

"Well, sex of course. In fact, it's extremely healthy for the parents to be intimate during the pregnancy." He stutters a little.

I throw my head back and laugh. “Oh no, there will be none of that going on between us ever again.”

“Oh?” Dr. Langly seems to be interested in my response. Too bad I’m not going to enlighten him.

My phone pings again, and I look at it. Frowning, I open up the picture that was sent to my phone by an unknown number. As soon as I see what it entails, I don’t have any way of holding him back, as Duke takes over and busts through the wooden door, leaving Lila and the doctor gawking at our departure.