

by CresetarPrudence

Faith's Pov

My shoulders ached, and my legs were sore. I had done so much today: helping in the kitchen and around the pack, making sure everything was running smoothly, taking care of the new children found outside the pack lands last night, and even playing with the others in the orphanage. All I wanted was to go home and soak in a warm bath.

The house was usually quiet by this time. Astor and I treated each other like we didn't exist. Sometimes he wasn't even home when I arrived, and most days I didn't even see him. But today felt different. I could hear laughter coming from the living room - laughter I hadn't heard from him in years, especially not in this house.

I felt anxiety in my heart even before I went inside. When I finally reached the living room, I was shocked. On the sofa sat my mate and fiancé, laughing their hearts out.

His eyes shone brighter than I'd ever seen them, and none of that joy was directed at me, but at her.

Alice.

My sister.

She was back.

She looked exactly the same, maybe even better. Time had been kind to her. From her long, wavy black hair to her bright green eyes, she had an unmatched beauty that would draw anyone in. She was truly a sight for sore eyes. Still, I didn't focus on her. I couldn't get over the sight in front of me: the way Astor looked at her, and the smile on her face.

It took me back to the time I didn't want to remember. The past. I didn't choose to be here, but my fate and destiny brought me back. I was an omega's daughter for 18 years of my life. I had a horrible life as well as a horrible mother who hated me. But I don't know why. My father was weak when it came to her, and he let her do whatever she wanted, but I endured because I was used to it until one day. She confessed not just to me but to everyone else that I wasn't her daughter. It was a bitter truth. She exchanged me and her daughter at birth, but the twist was that I was Alpha Connor of the Eclipse Pack's daughter.

For a few seconds, I couldn't breathe. A lump formed in my throat, and an unexplainable pain hit me.

The past was returning back into my life full force. I was back to being that scared girl who arrived at the Eclipse Pack with nothing but a backpack with three sets of clothes.

I wanted to turn back. I wasn't in any condition to face them. But then, Alice's eyes landed on me, and I saw her smile turn into something more sinister. I guess she really hadn't changed. The same old Alice who would do anything to destroy. But the difference was, this time she didn't have to do anything, because the sight in front of me was pain enough.

"Sis," she said, standing up. She didn't have to pretend to be happy to see me. I could clearly see the triumph in her eyes. She was happy to see the discomfort in me, how uncomfortable I was in that moment, and she took full advantage of it.

"I'm sorry we didn't see you," she continued. "I hope you haven't been standing there for long. You could have just joined us, since we have a lot of catching up to do."

I didn't know why she bothered to pretend. Everyone knew she didn't like me, and she had made it seem like I didn't like her either, even though I had no problem with her then, and I still don't. But somehow, she would always see me as a threat.

I know that she resents me for retrieving my real parents and making her Alpha Connor's adopted daughter. But I didn't come to destroy her life. Somehow, my arrival marked a change in all our lives. Before I came, everyone thought she would be Astor's fated mate. But as I came of age and met Astor, we discovered each other's mate bond. It shattered Alice's dreams.

She cried for a long time, but that didn't change the facts. So she started framing me in front of everyone. She always played the innocent girl to accuse me of treating her harshly, and her tears were the most powerful weapon.

Astor was silent when he first found out that I was his mate, but he never resisted the mate bond. However, with Alice's performance, he gradually distanced himself from me. I used to plead my case, but no one believed me because they chose to believe in Alice, with whom they had grown up.

Just when I was worried that Astor would reject me, Alpha Xander who is Astor's father gave him an ultimatum that left him no choice but to agree to marry me.

He either married his mate and guaranteed happiness and wealth for his pack, or he didn't deserve to be alpha.

Basically, Astor was forced to accept our relationship.

"I'm afraid I can't stay for that," Astor said. "I have a summit to get to, but we'll have plenty of time later."

That was the first thing he said, as he stood up and looked at me. There were no emotions whatsoever in his eyes, just cold indifference. It was something I was used to, but I had expected some kind of reassurance today, at least. Instead, he showed me exactly what my place was.

"Can you please prepare Alice a room?" He asked. I was shocked at his audacity.

"Is that the only thing you have to say?" I asked because I feel like he owes me an explanation, but I was ignored, which means that he's not asking me but telling me.

I wanted to ask why she was here, and more importantly, why I hadn't been informed. But the words were stuck in my throat. I knew I wouldn't like the answer, especially with the way he turned to look at her, giving her a comforting look instead of me. I felt like I was dying in front of him, but he never saw that. He didn't see my heartbreak, and he never does, because to him, I am invisible. I swallowed the lump in my throat, just to stop myself from breaking down right there.

"I wish I could cancel, but it's very important that I go to the summit." He told her. "But I will be here tonight."

He had never felt the need to tell me anything like that, because I didn't matter.

Alice immediately stood up and pulled him into a hug while I stood right in front of them. He didn't push her away.

"I missed you, so please come back soon," she said to him, and he looked at her with a tender expression.

I watched it all, like a silent observer in my own house, in my own life. He gave her the action I had been waiting for him to give me for the last two years. I couldn't even remember what his action felt like. It was a punch to my gut.

When he pulled away from her, he just walked away without even acknowledging me. Only Alice and I remained. The silence between us was thick. The innocent look that had been on her face when he was here was gone. All that was left was triumph in her eyes, and she deserved it, because she got everything that I could never get.

I took a deep breath and tried to regain my composure. I had to look put together, even if my whole world was crumbling inside.

"Alice," I began, "I must say it's a pleasure to see you. But unfortunately, I wasn't informed about your arrival. If I had been, I would have made preparations for you. I'm sorry, but we can't host you here. Please go back to the Eclipse Pack. I'm sure our parents will be very happy to see you." I said, and watched her face change: first shocked, then angry, and then, an unexpected smile.

"Oh no, sister, don't tell me he didn't tell you!" She said. By the smile on her face, I already knew I wasn't going to like it. She even took a step closer to me. "I was going to go home straight from the airport, but Astor begged me to come here. He also promised to throw a big party just for my welcome."