

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 81

“So, you think they were just waiting for her in neutral territory just waiting for us to get comfortable to attack?” I asked, my stomach sinking with the thought. I hated that I had left her even though I knew she had fallen asleep a while ago, and there was nothing more I could do for her.

“I think it’s possible,” Ethan shrugged. “But I also think it’s just as possible that you have a spy in your pack.”

I had to fight the urge to fight Ethan at his words and was glad that I hadn’t allowed myself to enter his cell today.

“I do not have a spy.” I ground out. “My pack is loyal.”

Ethan raised his arms in surrender, but his next words told me that he didn’t really believe me. “I think most are, yes. But I think it’s folly to think that every single person in this pack is. I mean, Grace is new. Grace is Lycan or even wolfless to some. They don’t really know her. You’ve been a heart throb for ages. Even I as a rogue have heard stories of girls fawning over you. I’m sure somebody out there could have a big enough motive to want Grace gone. And whoever it was could have easily tipped off Kinsley or Adrian, telling them that you weren’t going into the city with Grace. They could have followed them out of the pack themselves.

Followed at a distance, saw the prime opportunity, and told Adrian and Kinsley where Grace could be found. I don't suppose it would have been

terribly hard on any account."

I contemplated his words. They made a lot of sense. My pack didn't really know Grace. They had always welcomed every new bride though... Hadn't they? They had never seemed to care who they were before, but maybe I had been too blind in my disinterest to notice. Maybe there was more going on in my pack than I realized. I was going to need Leon to check surveillance of the border today and give me a list of every person who had

come in and out and when.

"Next to no one knew that she was going to the city." I tried to argue even though I was

hesitating a little.

"Then the person you're looking for might be even closer than you think." Ethan answered easily, giving me a look that made me think maybe he knew something.

But the only people who knew were Leon, Sawyer and Arlo... But again it had been Arlo's suggestion... Arlo was the only one who was hurt and who they threatened to take. But Arlo's story had matched Grace's so perfectly.

"I have already confirmed those that knew of the outings loyalty, but thank you for your suggestions," I said vehemently. I was not going to go around doubting those I trusted

most.

"I meant no harm," Ethan sighed. "I just want what's best for my sister... If you let me out, I can help you keep her safe."

"I'm sorry, but no. Not until I know Kinsley and Adrian's true intentions. You're safer here, and so is Grace."

Ethan sighed but seemed to accept my answer at least for now. I turned to leave when he

called me back.

"What?" I asked in irritation.

“I don’t know if it’s relevant, but legends say that there is more than one way to create a Lycan... They say you don’t necessarily have to be born one... And I worry that maybe the legends are true...”

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He seems to have forgotten that he recently kicked his brother Caleb out and allowed his crazy ex back into the pack, a woman who basically said she would kill Grace. Also, why did Kinsley...

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I left the dungeons with more questions than answers. Ethan hadn't been clear about what the legends were when I had asked him about them. He had said there were quite a few, and he didn't know which ones were true necessarily. There were things we were very clearly missing, but I couldn't seem to pinpoint what they were.

The moon was at its full height as I moved to the Leon's quarters subconsciously. When I finally reached his door, I hesitated for a moment before knocking.

Heather opened the door after a long couple of minutes with a sleepy look in her eyes and I felt bad that I was pulling Leon away from his family again like I had done so often these past few weeks. But I needed him then, just like I needed him now.

“Alpha, you are aware that it is the middle of the night, and if you had woken our kids, we would have had a major problem, right?”

I smiled. Very few people talked to me like I was a normal person, but Heather never held back her thoughts.

“I’m sorry, Heather, but I need to see-“

“Leon,” She cut me off, rolling her eyes. “Yes, yes, I know,” She waved me to follow her inside so she could wake her husband. “You better be paying him overtime for all this

extra work.”

“I’m sorry about all the extra work...” I apologized.

“Well, it’s not like he really wants to be around right now anyway,” She sighed, and I remembered how it was only a few weeks ago that he had found out Caleb had slept with his wife. “But he can’t avoid me or throw himself into work for forever. But enough about our troubles. Clearly you have enough on your mind. Let me go wake him up.”

“Heather, if you need to talk, you know I’m here for you, right?”

“Thanks, but I’m fine,” She said with a small sad smile. “Let me go get my husband.”

I stood in the family room surrounded by the life Leon had created and wondered if I was a part of the problem. Clearly, I was not as in control of my reign and my life as I had always thought.

“Middle of the night calls now, really?” Leon called out bitterly when he walked in and grabbed his coat.

“Yes.” I replied simply, opening the door for us to head out. “It’s important.”

“It never not is,” Leon sighed, leading us to my office. “What’s up?”

“I don’t even know where to start,” I said honestly as I sat down and poured myself a drink and then another for Leon. “But I guess let’s start with the most concerning thing to me... I went to talk to Ethan about what was going on and how Kinsley and Adrian could have found Grace, and he offered quite a bit of information... However, I don’t know

what’s the truth. It’s like he’s just giving crumbs.”

“I mean that sort of makes sense... He wants to be seen as useful so we don’t just get rid

of him. He’s being smart by keeping us on our toes.” Leon defended the 21-year-old.

I hated that he was right, but that did make some sense. It’s what I would do in that situation, so why would I be surprised when someone else was trying the same tactic?

“But irrelevant,” Leon waved it off. “What did Ethan say to you that caused you to wake

me up in the middle of the night?”

“He told me that there is more than one way to create a Lycan. You don’t have to be born to Lycan parents, it can be created... He said he wasn’t sure which legends were true, but that there was one that tended to be spoken of the most...”

“Oh my god,” Leon stood up abruptly, “I’ll be right back!”

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I stared after him and wondered what that was about, but I didn't wait too long before he barreled back in with an old, worn book in his hands that he threw down on the desk.

"What's this?" I asked with a frown.

"A folklore book that I found just a few days ago. You asked me and Sawyer to try and find out what we could, and I realized that just because we don't know about it today, doesn't mean it used to be that way, so I found one of the oldest folklore books that I could find in hopes that Lycan were mentioned, and they were. I just haven't had the chance to read it yet, but I'd bet that it talks about how to create them."

I tore through the book till I found the section, and began reading all that I could, and Leon moved to over my shoulder so he could read it to...

Lycans can be created by two Lycans breeding, as well as biting a non-Lycan, similar to how a vampire is created.

“The fuck,” Leon muttered as he read what I did. “Are you thinking what I am?”

“That they are creating a Lycan army? Yea, that’s exactly what I’m thinking.”

“What about Grace?” Leon asked.

“What do you mean?” I asked with a frown.

“Do you think they want her so bad because they created her?”

“No...” I said slowly, thinking it over. “No, I don’t think so. I think her Alpha genes are

just stronger than Kinsley's. The witch said the Grace could shift since birth, so that

wouldn't make sense. And why bound her if you made her?"

"Yea, okay. That makes sense." Leon nodded. "I didn't get a good look at the bookstore clerk, but maybe they didn't just kill her in cold blood... Maybe they turned her..."

"Like maybe they were in neutral territory for recruits?" I frowned. This was getting more sinister by the moment.

"It's an option..." Leon said slowly. "I need some air. Let's go to the garden, no one should

be out there this time of night."

I agreed, my mind reeling. There was so much that we did not understand, and it was all happening right under our noses. I hated how out of control everything felt.

We walked the gardens till dawn, just trying to piece it all together and come up with our own plan till the sun started to rise. My body was exhausted, but my

mind didn't seem any less settled even after hours of talking to my best friend about it.

"So, what are you going to tell Grace?" Leon asked with a yawn, exhaustion seeping from him in the same way it was me.

"Tell Grace?" I asked, not understanding what he meant.

"Yea," Leon looked at me like I was dumb. "You need to tell her everything you know or

suspect so that she can make informed decisions too. Our plan revolves around her help, she deserves to know what she's getting into, and she may even offer her own ideas and

thoughts to make it more secure."

"You know, if you weren't my best friend, I'd never allow you to talk to me like that," I

grumbled.

“If I wasn’t your best friend, you’d be in a heap of more trouble than you are now. I suggest you tell your mate everything.”

“Okay, fine.” I sighed. “But she doesn’t accept herself yet. We have a lot of work to do.”

“Then we help her figure it out.” Leon said confidentially as he placed his hand on my

shoulder.

I nodded. I would do everything I could to make sure Grace knew she held all the power, so she could finally start to believe in herself.

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Leon and I walked back to the packhouse in silence. I never really liked making plans about anything outside of my office, but if we hadn't gone to the garden, I fear we would have fallen asleep a long time ago.

"Is Grace okay after everything that happened?" Leon asked when we made it the stairs where we'd separate for a while.

"I mean, no. Not really. She was about as good as she can be. But I'm hoping that with a good night's sleep, she will feel a bit better today. She's worried I won't accept her if she's a Lycan, but I have no way to prove that I will until she's unbound and becomes a Lycan."

I told him.

"Just keep being there and supporting her. She'll come around." Leon smiled. "I'm going to go sleep for a couple of hours as long as the girls let me, then I'll be ready to work

some more.”

“Thanks. See ya later.” I said. I wanted to say something about Heather, but what could I say? It was my fault I let my brother’s behavior go on as long as it had.

I made my way upstairs, lost in my thoughts, but also exhausted. I knew I needed to talk to Grace, but a part of me wanted to sleep for a few more hours.

When I opened the door to our room, I was surprised to see Grace was awake, sitting up in our bed, wrapped in a blanket, her fingers tapping anxiously on the pillow.

“Hi,” I said in surprise.

“Hi.” She said, looking up at me, and I hated that I could see the anxiety in her eyes. “Where were you? You’ve been gone a while.”

“I’m sorry, love,” I kissed her forehead, kicked off my shoes and joined her in the bed. “I didn’t mean to be gone so long. I couldn’t sleep, so I went to talk to Arlo and then I went to see Ethan because I thought he might know something, and then I went to Leon because I needed to talk some things out, and we’ve been in the garden for the last few hours trying to come up with a plan.”

“You could have talked to me...” She said with a frown, so I leaned over and pecked her lips.

“That’s why I’m here now, my love.” I told her. “Because we have a lot to discuss. I’m sorry I didn’t realize you were awake yet. I would have come back sooner, if I had

realized.”

“It’s fine,” She sighed, relaxing into my touch as I caressed her face. “What did you

learn?”

“Well, I suppose the biggest thing I need to tell you is we think we figured out part of Kinsley and Adrian’s plan. We discovered that you don’t have to be born to be a Lycan, all it takes is a bite, similar to vampires. We think they might be creating an army of Lycans.”

“Oh god, that’s a terrifying,” Grace gasped, burying her head into my shoulder. “If my

pack was Lycan already though, where are they getting people from?”

“We were thinking about that too. Obviously, there are some werewolves who were among your pack, and since Adrian married in and they combined pack, I’m not sure if he was Lycan before or if he was changed and brought his whole pack to change.” I explained, choosing my words carefully. “We also think that might have been why they were in neutral territory yesterday. Perhaps they were trying to get new recruits.”

“Are they giving new recruits a choice or are they just forcing it?” She asked quietly as she touched her neck in memory of what they had once taken from her.

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maybe they need her or her blood in order to make the Lycans.

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“I’m not sure, my love,” I whispered, feeling unsure as I took her hand in mine as we laid there just looking at each other. “I think that might be why they are so intent on getting you back... You’re a true Lycan. The newly created Lycans might be feeling resentful toward Adrian and Kinsley and would need a true leader, which would be you. You were born Lycan, and a leadership role of that sort would fit you perfectly.

“No,” She said firmly, refusing to look at me. “I am not made to be a leader. I don’t even think I’m fit to be a Luna of any sort, let alone your Luna. No one in their right mind would want me to be a leader of any sort.”

“Gracie, you are beyond powerful. You have endured more than anyone should ever have to. You should embrace your strength and who you are.”

She stood up, taking me by surprise, and I sat up wondering what just happened.

“I am not meant to be a leader.” She repeated, her voice shaking with something I didn’t understand. “I’m going to get breakfast. I’ll see you later.”

And then she was gone. I sighed. I didn’t know what I had done wrong, but Leon and Sawyer’s past words of be patient with her were screaming at me and my wolf who was howling at the way she left.

I laid there for a while, waiting for her to come back, but she didn’t. So, I made my way down to the dining room, but she was long gone. I tried to ask if anyone had seen where she went, but no one seemed to know. I checked the garden because I knew it was her favorite place, but I didn’t see her there or any of her usual spots. I eventually mindlinked Sawyer to find her and keep an eye on things from a distance and made my way to my

office.

I attempted to get some work done for a while, every now and again dozing off at my

desk. I kept checking in with Sawyer on Grace, but he said she was avoiding everyone and

just sort of pacing.

When it was finally deemed late enough for dinner, I made my way up to the floor I shared with Grace and Sawyer. I knew with her being in the mood she was in, she wouldn't want to eat downstairs, and it was no surprise when she walked in with her plate in her hand, mumbling to herself.

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"Grace? Are you alright?" I asked.

She startled, looking up at me with wide eyes as her plate hit the counter and snapped right in her hands.

"Oh." She looked down and then at me.

"Sorry, my love, I thought you realized I was here." I told her as I got up to help with the

mess.

My heart began to race when I noticed her hand was bleeding. I grabbed her hand in mine and began to ask, “Are you al-”

But I didn’t finish my sentence as her hand began to heal itself immediately right before

our eyes.

She looked up at me, stunned, and I knew I mirrored her expression.

“I’ve never seen a wound heal like that.” I told her as I grabbed a piece of ceramic and cut my own hand, causing her to gasp, but I wasn’t worried as my skin began to close the same way hers had. “See? The healing is proof of your Alpha lineage, Grace. You are so much more than they ever wanted you to believe.”

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maybe they need her or her blood in order to make the Lycans.

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I had avoided Rhys all day, and just when I was starting to get my feet back on the ground, everything was becoming topsy-turvy again! What was happening? My hand was just healing right before my eyes! And the Rhys' did the same thing!

“What the hell?!” I whispered.

“I’m telling you, Gracie,” Rhys whispered. “You are magnificent.”

“I don’t understand,” I looked at Rhys in shock. “I’ve never healed like this. I’ve had injuries my whole life, I’ve been beaten nearly to death on more than one occasion, and I’ve never once healed like this or like at all.. This has to be the mate bond or something.”

“The mate bond might have strengthened you, Grace, but this is all you, baby girl. You probably didn’t heal properly before for several reasons,” He explained with a little bit of awe in his voice. “You were frequently injured at a high frequency. But now, your body has adjusted. You’ve been able to heal naturally. You’ve been able to rest and build your strength back up. And with that, and maybe me marking you, your Lycan seems closer to the surface, just waiting to break free of the bonds.”

I pondered his words. They made sense, but they also made me anxious. “But I don’t want to break free of my binds” I told Rhys unable to hide the fear from my voice.

“I’m not so sure that’s going to be a choice, my love.” He said.

He then gently ran his thumb over my cheek, and leaned into his touch, suddenly feeling guilty for avoiding him all day. He had just been trying to be supportive, and I had run. To be fair, I had never had anyone be supportive before, and it made me panic a little bit. But he was here and he was trying. He wasn’t the big scary Alpha King to me anymore. He

was just Rhys. My Rhys.

“I should clean up this mess,” I said after a long moment when I realized we were standing on broken ceramics and my dinner.

“No, I’ll call someone to clean it-up, and I’ll have them bring you another plate.”
He

answered, guiding me away from the mess and to a chair at the countertop.

“I’m not really –” I started, but Rhys cut me off.

“You need to eat Grace.”

“But-”

“No. We need you to keep gaining your strength. We only just got started earlier on what I wanted to talk about earlier, but I don’t want to overload you if you need more time to process. I just unfortunately don’t think we have a lot of it to take.”

I took a deep breath and closed my eyes. I could do this. I could be whatever Rhys needed. It was only fair to try and be what he needed me to be.

“Okay,” I said finally. “Okay, I am ready...”

“Are you sure? Because it can wait another day if you need a little more time.” Rhys offered.

“No, I’ll let you know if I need time.” I said more confidently than I felt. “Please go ahead.”

“Okay, well as you know Leon and I were up most of the night trying to come up with a plan to counter against Adrian and Kinsley. And I believe that our first step is to call a meeting reveal your true identity to the Kingdom.”

“My true identity?” I frowned. “I don’t understand.”

“You are an Alpha’s daughter, you are my mate, you are Lycan. You deserved better than you got, but it won’t be until we tell everyone your story that you start to truly get your revenge on all those who have hurt you like you told me you wanted the other day.”

I hesitated. A part of me knew he was right, but I wasn't sure I was ready for that. It was a huge step and would probably be the biggest I've taken other than maybe talking again. On the other hand, I also knew Rhys wouldn't be asking, if he didn't think it was

necessary.

“Okay, if you think that's the best next step, let's do it.”

Rhys smiled and kissed my lips, as one of the servant girls, Claudia, brought in a tray of food, and began to clean up the mess I had made earlier.

“Thank you, Grace. I will have Leon send out invites tonight for tomorrow in neutral

territory.”

“Tomorrow? Why so soon?” I felt my nerves flutter again as I stared at the plate in front of me, once again no longer hungry.

“The sooner the better,” Rhys stated firmly. “They seem to be ten steps ahead of us, we

need to start making up ground.”

The rest of the evening went without a hitch. We finished dinner and fell into bed exhausted. I couldn't imagine how tired Rhys must have been after not sleeping, but I was glad to know that he would be with me all night this time. When our alarms went off, it still felt too early. Rhys arranged for Alana to come and help me get ready, and before I knew it, we were off to the same place I hated just a few days ago, only this time, Rhys

was with me.

“You look like you're going to throw up, Grace,” Rhys teased slightly, his face filled with

amusement.

“I just might.” I told him, my nerves getting the better of me. “I don't think I can do this,”

I told him as the streets started to become busier, and the meeting hall closer.

“I will be right there with you the whole time.” He said sincerely as he took my hand in

his. “Do you know what you want to do about your brother yet?”

My frown deepened. We had talked about Ethan for a little while last night before bed,

and Rhys had told me that Ethan had asked for his freedom, so he could help protect me.

The sentiment was sweet, but I didn’t know what I wanted when it came to him. Rhys had

been honest too, saying that he wasn’t sure what he would do in my position, nor did he fully trust him. I mean, I hardly knew the guy, so it was hard for me to think of him as

family, even if he was.

“I don’t know.” I answered after a long moment as the car slowed down, approaching a large building that looked very out of place surrounded by so many tall buildings.

“Are you ready?” He asked as he gave my hand a gentle squeeze.

“Ready as I’ll ever be.” I answered.

But I regretted my answer as soon as we entered the meeting hall. There were so many more people here than what I expected. For a last-minute call, over 90% of our pack, and

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70% of the surrounding allied packs had showed up so far. My heart began to race, and I felt my hands begin to get sweaty, and I clung to Rhys like he was a lifeboat. This was terrifying, and we hadn’t even started yet...

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Rhys pulled me along through the meeting hall and up onto the small stage, and I did my best to walk with confidence even if it was fake. Rhys needed me to keep my head up during this, so I would do my best not to disappoint him.

I breathed a sigh of relief when Sawyer joined us at the front, standing just off to the side, but near enough that I could feel his presence. It was nice to know no matter what happened here tonight, I had a friend here.

“Good evening, everyone!” Rhys had all eyes on him as he called the meeting to a start. “I am grateful that so many of you were able to make this meeting on such short notice. I

know that many of you are wondering why I have called you here today...”

I did my best not to fidget but I tuned out whatever Rhys was saying. I could practically feel the eyes of every woman in the room boring into me, and it made me want to squirm even more. They hated me, but they didn’t even know me. We hadn’t even told my story

yet. We hadn't had the chance to help them understand where I was coming from.
I was

just the girl with the guy who everyone thought was going to get left or killed just
like all

the other girls who had come before me. The thought sent another wave of nausea

through me.

"And without further ado," Rhys place his hand on the small of my back, bringing
me back to the now, "I'd like to introduce, my newly marked mate, Grace
Cairstairs!"

I took a tiny step forward and gave the best smile I could and gave a small wave.
The crowd erupted into cheers and applause. I took step back into Rhys arms, and
I heard him whisper in my ear, "I'm so proud of you". And for a moment, I felt like
I was on top of the

world. For a moment, it was like I was finally being seen. But then I remembered
that in

another few moments, I really would be seen, and I worried how the people would take it.

“Thank you everyone for your encouragement, I know it’s been a long time coming,” Rhys

laughed, and the audience laughed with him. My goddess, he was a natural public speaker. He had the crowd in the palm of his hand, and there were a lot of them. “We have kept things fairly quiet since we met, but I wanted you all to be the first to know. Now does anybody have any questions?”

“How did you guys meet?” Someone called out. A little bit nosey of a question, but I knew Rhys had been banking on someone asking it, so he could setup what was **to** come next.

“Well, that is a large part of why we are here today. Grace and I met under some rather

unfortunate circumstances, and this story has moments where it is hard to tell, but we are

here to tell it.” He then lifted my hand to his lips and gave it a gentle kiss; the women around were swooning! “Grace is from the Red Blood pack who betrayed her. She was

treated like a slave in her own home. She was tortured both emotionally and physically. And in any pack, we would find this unacceptable and disgusting. However, Grace was not

just a pack member, she was the daughter of Alpha Andrew!”

Murmurs of surprise filled the room, and it took all I had not to just run away.

“I thought Alpha Andrew’s daughter was Kinsley?” Someone asked.

“That’s what I heard too!” Someone else added, and I felt sick by how many people were

saying they knew of Kinsley.

“Kinsley is the daughter of Alpha Andrew and his mate, Luna Ava. However, Alpha Andrew

had an affair and kept a mistress on the side. Her name was Louanne, and Grace is the

daughter of Louanne and Alpha Andrew.” Rhys explained calmly, but I didn’t feel calm. This was crazy. I should have never agreed to do this.

“How come nobody has ever heard of Alpha Andrew having another child?”
Someone else

shouted out.

“Well, Louanne died shortly after Grace’s birth. After that, unfortunately, Grace was not treated like the daughter of the family. She was a stain on their perfect family. Her powers were bound repeatedly, and she was enslaved by her so-called family. She was subjected

to horrible conditions, daily beatings, and once I assume she was old enough, marked against her own will by a coward that I will one day find.” Rhys growled. The anger and bitterness in his voice to what had happened to me was enough to make me fall in love

with him all over again.

A silence fell over the crowd, and they were all waiting for Rhys to continue with bated

breaths, unsure about what they were going to hear next.

“You should be absolutely outraged at all of this. Nobody should ever be treated like that, let alone by your own family. She may not have been their heir, but she deserved better. Grace has been able to overcome so much, and I got lucky that I visited when I did, and she walked in that room I was in. I was able to get her out, and she has been working on healing outside of the public eye, and we kindly request you allow her to continue. But there **is** something else you should know. The Red Blood pack, despite what the pretend

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are not werewolves, they are a creature called, Lycan. And I think that it is important for you to know that Grace is also a Lycan.”

There was a murmur among the crowd again, but this time, the looks I was getting were more sympathetic and sadder, instead of outright cold. Rhys gave my hand a squeeze, and I had to fight back the tears that flooded my eyes when Beta Leon and Arlo stepped forward in support.

“A Lycan? I’ve never heard of that!”

“Me either!”

I began to feel nauseous again as Rhys explained the short version of what we knew about Lycans which sadly, wasn’t really a ton.

“That sounds terrifying.” Someone called out. “How do we know she’s not a threat to the Kingdom?!”

“I assure you, there is nothing to be concerned about.” Rhys responded coolly. “I would never bring a mate into my pack or the kingdom who was going to harm my people or do damage to the pack in anyway. And anyone who questions my decision, I will not tolerate

dissent!”

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Chapter 88

The crowd seemed to hear Rhys' words and took them seriously. No one else dared to question him about me and my place here, at least not now anyway. I was touched by how quickly he came to my defense, and how absolute he had been with his words. He made me want to learn everything even quicker, so that I could become the absolute best Luna.

Rhys nodded to me before continuing. "I am grateful to have Grace by my side and cannot wait to see what good she does for this kingdom. In honor of my recent mating, we will celebrate by having a pack hunt in two days!"

The crowd cheered again, but I still felt apprehensive. This was now, but what if when they learned what was happening in the Blood Moon pack they turned on me? I wasn't them, but would others be able to see that?

Instead of sinking in these feelings though, I smiled and waved at the crowd as Rhys led me back to the car, his hand on the small of my back, tucking me in close to him which I appreciated. Being with Rhys made it easier to face just about everything... I just had to block from my head that just a few streets away, I had been nearly kidnapped, witnessed a friend get her, and saw a dead body. Yea, easy peasy to just block it from my head. Ugh Grace, why did you have to go there? I yelled at myself.

Rhys opened the car door and helped me in before following behind me. I was grateful that we hadn't driven ourselves, and that Sawyer was our driver, Rhys didn't trust anyone else right now, minus maybe Leon.

"I think that went well," Leon stated once the car was moving.

I nodded, "I agree."

"I actually expected more pushback," Rhys admitted, "But I'm glad it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. I mean, you've been around the pack for a couple months now, so a lot of people at the very least have seen you around. And I've never even considered introducing anyone to the pack before, no one ever felt right, but when it comes to you, Grace, I want to scream it from the rooftops."

"That would be very unlike you," I smiled at his dramatics.

“You make me feel like a new person,” He kissed my hand gently. “I promise to never

abandon you, Grace. You are stuck with me for life. All I want to do is go home and rip these clothes off of you and spend the rest of the day in our room.”

His kisses trailed up my arm, and I felt my worries melt away a little, but I still had one foot set in reality.

“Don’t we have things to do?” I attempted to remind him.

“No.” Rhys answered. “Nothing important.”

I laughed because we both knew that wasn’t true, but we were enjoying this moment to

ourselves.

“Rhys?” Sawyer’s voice rang from the intercom system in the car, since the dark divider

was up.

Rhys groaned in annoyance, but he answered back, “Yes?”

“Hate to interrupt, but Allison is standing on the side of the road, waving us down.”

Rhys rolled his eyes but told Sawyer to pullover just the same before getting out of the car and marching toward her.

I wasn’t sure if I was supposed to follow or not but sitting in the car alone felt unsettling.

“What’s wrong, Allison?” Rhys asked, but there was a sense of boredom or lack of care in his voice that as his mate, I appreciated.

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5:22 pm G

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

“What’s wrong? What’s wrong?!” She asked, her voice hysterical. “What’s wrong is that you decided to take a monster as your mate!”

Rhys‘ face immediately transformed into anger, but he was attempting to keep his cool.

“As I stated earlier,” Rhys said coldly, “Any dissent will not be tolerated. Grace is my mate. I have marked Grace. Grace is an amazing person, who does not need your doubts. Any move against Grace will be considered treason against the Kingdom, so I would tread carefully if I was you.”

“Rhys, you are making a mistake!” She tried to grab his arm, but he shook her off and looked at her like she was vermin.

“This is your last warning, Allison. I will not be so lenient next time.” He then turned to me and forced a small smile. “Come on Grace, let’s go home.”

I took his offered hand, unsure of how I felt. There was something about Allison that didn’t sit well with me. She was clearly not the kind of girl who was used to not getting her way, but how far would she go? Sawyer and Leon had both been worried for me when she had come back. I hadn’t seen her since that first day, but was I being too naive? Should I be worried for my own safety within the pack? I realized that Allison had personal reasons to hate me, but did others even need a reason?

The rest of the car ride was spent in silence, both of us just lost in our own thoughts. Everything just felt like it was spinning out of control, but in reality, nothing had been in my control in a very long time, if ever.

“Oh good, your back!” Arlo exclaimed happily when we walked in. “Come, I have something to show you.”

We waited for Sawyer and Leon to join us, then followed Arlo back to his cottage in the woods, and I wondered what this was all about and why he was so excited about it.

Rhys and I sat at the table, my hand in his, but otherwise, we didn't say anything, and

Sawyer and Leon as Arlo rushed around looking for something.

"So, you said something in the meeting that really caught my attention. You stated that Lycan's are similar to wolves but are bi-pedal and more or less one and the same, just in a

different form. And it reminded me of an ancient text I have somewhere..." He trailed off for a moment and all we heard was shuffling before he said, "Ah there it is," and an old dusty leather-bound book was placed on the table.

"I don't understand," Rhys said as Arlo frantically flipped through it. "Does this book have something to do with Lycans?"

"I read this book many years ago when I was writing my own book about pack history. It doesn't explicitly say anything about Lycans, but somewhere in here, it mentions, "wolf- humans". I had chalked it up to legends before, but now,

knowing that their real, I'm sure that there is more information in here." He paused for a moment, frustrated that he couldn't find the section he was looking for. "However, there is a story about a wolf- human who was repeatedly bound, and they died on the third binding. That was the most that have ever been done according to history..."

He found the page at that moment, and looked up at me, looking me dead in the eye before saying, "So theoretically, Grace, you should be dead."

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The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

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Chapter 90

My heart hammered in my chest. Dead? I should be dead? They hated me that much that they wanted me dead? I mean, I guess much was obvious but still... Did they know this

when they did bound me?

Rhys squeezed my hand and gave me a worried look.

“Binding someone is considered the harshest form of punishment there is for a wolf.” Arlo continued. “It is not something that should ever be done lightly, but this text does talk

about the several times that it was done. I should have realized that it wasn't just legend when I was bound myself, but I didn't think anything of it."

I felt dizzy. There was so much information coming at me so fast these days, I felt so

overwhelmed. My mother really was so afraid of me that she had me bound several times?

She had really risked the life of her child like that? And how old was the person who had died? If it was the harshest punishment, then they must have been old enough to have

done something really bad... And I had been just a child... A baby the first two times...

Did my mother know the risks? Or had she been so panicked that her child could shift at

birth that she did the only thing she thought would protect me?

"But Grace is alive and overall healthy. In fact, this is the healthiest I think she's ever

been, and she's been bound at least 3 times." Sawyer argued, his lips tight with disagreement.

"And I literally watched her heal last night when she cut herself." Rhys added. "There

must be more to it. She doesn't seem like she's dying."

Arlo raised his hands in defense. "I am just telling you what I remember reading, it's been a long time, but I still remember that part of the book pretty vividly because I found it fascinating, but I didn't read the whole section."

"I don't find the death of my mate fascinating." Rhys responded coldly.

"I didn't mean it like that," Arlo said looking flustered. "I just meant-

"We know you didn't," Sawyer intervened shooting a glare at his brother, and I was glad he was protecting Arlo, but I also hated how they were talking about me

like I wasn't even here. "It just this doesn't make any sense. Maybe her bindings weren't complete?"

1/3

"Or maybe when I marked her it counteracted something?" Rhys suggested hopefully.

"Should I be worried about dying?" I asked, feeling the panic inside me rising.

"I'm not sure," Arlo stated, uncertainly. "I'll have to do more research, when I read this before. I was researching something completely different."

"Why didn't you tell us you had information on Lycans before?" Rhys snapped in frustration, grabbing the book. "We've been blind this whole time."

"I didn't know you were needing Lycan information until you revealed at the meeting today that Grace was one." Arlo defended. "If I had known I would have started to research it earlier. I always assumed that these stories were folklore legends. I didn't know there was any truth to any of them."

"Seriously," I could barely contain my anxiety anymore. My heart felt like it was going to beat out of my chest. "Should I be worried that I am going to die?"

“Grace...” Rhys reached for me, but I pulled away.

“Somebody tell me I’m not going to die.” I panicked.

“I’m afraid no one knows,” Arlo said sadly, but he looked unsure of his answer.

“Grace, we’ll figure it out...” Rhys got out of his chair and moved toward me.

But I didn’t want him to touch me. I had come so close to death so many times. I had been tortured and beaten to within an inch of my life on more than one occasion. I had been starved and had no one to care for me. I couldn’t believe I was going to die from something that had happened to me as a baby!

“I need some air!” I exclaimed, dodging Rhys and heading straight out the door, hoping the chill of the evening would be enough to settle my brain.

“You!”

I had been so lost in my thoughts, that I hadn't noticed Allison at the end of Arlo's driveway till she yelled. Great. The last thing I needed was for her to make a scene. The last several days have been enough. I didn't need this too.

"What?" I snapped at her.

5:22 pm G D

"You bitch! How could Rhys choose you?! You are nothing! You aren't pretty. You don't talk much. Nobody knows who you are! Your last pack treated you like dirt, I don't know understand how you are his mate! I have done everything for him!"

"You are asking the wrong person," I tried to brush it off, but her words felt like she was taking a knife to my chest and digging out my heart. "I don't know why he chose me, but it doesn't matter anyway." I told her as my mind returned to my potential dying.

"You are not worthy of the Alpha King!" Allison stated as she got closer, so she was practically in my face. "You are nothing. You are less than nothing. And I suggest you leave him if you know what's fucking good for you." She sneered.

I didn't know what to say. Everything she said made sense. Rhys kept trying to tell me that I was powerful. That *I* was something more than I was allowing myself to be. But maybe that wasn't true. Maybe those things were only what he wanted me to be, and I would never be able to be that for him.

Tears flooded my eyes. Allison was perfect. She was gorgeous. She was strong. She was powerful. She had no fear, and I was trying not to let her see that I was terrified of her. I knew she was trying to be intimidating, and that was her who gimmick. But just because I knew it, didn't change how it made me feel, especially when she was right. I was nothing. I was nothing.

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