

## Chapter 0009

[Rosco's POV]

"I am."

Denali's words are strong and clear, despite the tears that are brimming in her eyes. And despite the quiver of her lip, her gaze holds steady, and the hatred there is like a knife to the heart.

No, I couldn't let her continue to fool me. This was all a fucking trick, and I wouldn't be played the fool.

"How?" I hiss, removing my fingers and taking a step back. "Everyone knows..."

"What my father wants them to know," she finishes for me. "Are you one to believe everything you're told without any solid proof?"

Solid proof? There was plenty of fucking proof! When it came to pack gatherings and events, the gossip was deafening. However, here I was with that very daughter, and I was finding that she wasn't what she was said to be.

"This has to be some trick," I growl, narrowing my gaze. "Did that bastard send a fake in place of his daughter?"

As I speak, I reach out and grab Denali's arm and tug, pulling her off the bed and then across the room.

"How dare he have the audacity..."

"Wait!" She gasps, stumbling behind me. "Could you just listen for a minute?"



"Why should I listen to someone who is masquerading as the daughter of Emerald Moon? Do you know what happens to fakes in Crystal Fang?"

"I don't," she responds steadily. "But I'm sure you're going to tell me."

"Listen here!" I snarl, slamming her against the wall and then wrapping my hand around her neck. "If you dare talk down to me one more time, I'll..."

"Kill me?" She challenges me, fixing me with that damned gaze and continuing to stay steady. "Go ahead then; I'm not stopping you."

At her words, I feel like I've been punched in the gut. Who the hell was this woman, really? Did you wish for death that much?

Fuck, this was infuriating. Why did I even care?

'Because she's special,' Fabian whimpers. 'You knew back then, and you know now.'

'There is nothing special about a liar and a fake!' I snarl, punching the wall beside Denali's head. 'Does she have you fooled too?'

Snapping out of my head, I stare into Denali's eyes as if I would find the answer to all my questions there, but I continue to come up empty.

"You're going back to Emerald Moon so that your father can send his real daughter," I finally hiss through gritted teeth. "Pack your things."

"I can't!" She gasps, her eyes growing wide. "If I do, they'll..."

"I don't give a damn," I huff, cutting her off. "That's your problem, not mine. Now do as I said before I do it for you."



Growing quiet, I wait as Denali remains in place with a look of struggle on her face, but after another moment, she simply nods. Stepping back, I watch as she scurries off, and only when she disappears into her room do I turn and make my way to my father's office.

Kicking open the door, I head inside to find him looking over documents from his business's most recent project. When his gaze comes to rest on me, it fills with questioning and then turns accusatory.

"What is it?" He snaps, leaning back in his chair. "What is with the sudden intrusion?"

"Are you in on it?" I growl, slamming my hands on his desk. "Was this your way of ensuring that I'm unable to inherit the position of alpha and CEO of Torres Industries?"

Honestly, I wouldn't put it past him, especially when I knew that he wanted Hanson, my cousin, to take his place instead of me. However, my grandfather ensured that wouldn't be possible unless I failed to meet his requirements.

"What are you going on about?" My father asks, narrowing his gaze. "I don't understand the accusation."

"You don't understand?" I repeat, digging my claws into his desk. "Were you aware that the woman you married me off to wasn't the true daughter of Emerald Moon?"

"Not the true daughter? Of course she is!"

This was all the proof I needed that my father was in on it. Even now, when I discovered the truth, he was claiming I married the right woman.

"File for divorce immediately," I snap, straightening out. "And bring the



real daughter of Emerald Moon here. If you think this little trick will stop me from taking what is rightfully mine, you're wrong."

"Boy, what on earth are you spouting about?" My father sighs. "I don't know what you're thinking, but that is the true daughter of Emerald Moon."

"She's a virgin!" I roar. "Everyone knows that..."

"If you would calm down for a moment, I can explain," he continues, cutting me off. "There are two daughters of Emerald Moon. One is a stepdaughter and therefore does not possess the right to succession. However, the one that you married is the one and only daughter."

Eyes widening, I take in what I'm being told as Denali's hurt expression flashes in my mind.

"Another daughter," I repeat, feeling that same stabbing pain in my chest from earlier. "He had another daughter?"

"That's correct," my father confirms. "And the one you married is the true daughter that was requested in your grandfather's will."

"Fuck," I hiss, wanting to punch something. "You've got to be fucking kidding me."

As the words leave my lips, the woman in question appears with all her things.

"I'm..." she begins, looking uncomfortable. "Packed."

"Why on earth would you be?" My father gasps, jumping up. "Rosco, what the hell have you done?"



“That’s a damn question.”

What the hell did I do? If she was the actual daughter and the one with the bad reputation wasn’t, then I misjudged her completely.

Unable to fully believe the sudden turn of events, I take Denali in. Just like the first time I ever laid eyes on her, tears brimmed her lashes, and a lost look covered her features. However, unlike the first time, this was completely because of me.

“Please excuse my son’s behavior,” my father continues, moving forward. “Whatever has happened between the two of you is a misunderstanding. Please, why don’t you...”

“No,” she says, shaking her head. “It isn’t. I’m just not the one that he was hoping for; that’s all, and I can’t possibly stand in the way of what he wants.”

What I wanted? Did she really believe that I wanted her stepsister over her? She had to be out of her mind. But if she was the daughter of that bastard, then this would complicate things even further. How was I supposed to enact my revenge on someone so innocent?



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