

Chapter 12

Peter

Adrian and Grace were no help, leading me to believe they'd kept the girl for another reason, though we may never know the truth. I removed her quickly after Calvin's temper got the better of him, though I believe it was more his protective nature than anything. It wouldn't be difficult for anyone to work out that I moved Dorothy to Lunar Falls. Still, I am confident that Robert can keep her safe.

I cross into the territory as the sun rises. I'll be at the packhouse in just a few hours and can sleep a bit. I am shocked, though, as I pull up to find Calvin driving the young Alpha's SUV.

"So you learned?" I say with a smile as we all climb out of the cars and gather between them.

"He's got it," Robert speaks up. "Just needs some practice, but he'll be ne."

Robert leads us to his office, and the door is barely even closed before Calvin turns to me. "Were you aware that Dorothy is the Alpha?"

I nod slowly. "Her father requested to change the line of succession when she was a young girl. He's a good man, so I figured he had his reasons and approved it."

"It put her in danger," he says, his hands balled into fists at his size.

I tilt my head, looking at him. "Any shewolf with the Alpha gene is in danger," I try to explain. He was in that bubble for so long. Perhaps he doesn't know. "Some of our... less upstanding Alphas have been known to kidnap them and breed them, hoping their sons will be stronger because of the gene."

"We need to go to Worm Moon next," he says, and I'm not sure he heard anything I just said.

I sigh. "We can't just go there, Calvin," I try to explain gently. "We have been to two packs. We must travel to others and make it look believable before arriving there. If they do have her, they will hide her."

He nods. "I'll find her."

I flop down on the couch like a worn-down man, not the former king. "You said you felt her last night, and it lasted longer?"

He nods again, and I can see he's ready to jump in the car and go right now. He's not interested in talking about anything. He just wants to go. He's so much like Benjamin was at that age.

"I pushed my aura to her like you said," he says softly, so unsure. "I think it helped. It changed how it felt, so Mace did the same."

The pain on his face is heart-wrenching. Asking him to wait is terrible, but what choice do we have? "Why do you want to go to Worm Moon immediately? What makes you think that's where we should start?"

"Dorothy told me what happened and how the pack backed her brother. We're assuming that Ada didn't because she said she saw her running, but we don't know that."

"Why would he hurt his own sister if she's not against him?" I ask, trying to work through this together.

"I don't know," he yells at me, frustration bubbling over. "I just need to find her!"

I stand and take him by the shoulders. "I know, Calvin. I understand. But if we let on that we have Dorothy and are searching for Ada and word spreads, they will hide her or something worse."

Robert comes up and pats his shoulder. "Go for a run, man. It'll help. We'll see what we can work out while you're gone."

Calvin's breathing is ragged, frustration consuming him, but he nods once and turns to leave us.

"You gotta find that girl before he burns the whole kingdom down," Robert tells me, his voice deadly serious.

"I know," I tell him, sitting back down on the couch. "But they WILL hide her."

He nods. "I was in training with Anthony, though he was a bit younger."

"What can you tell me?"

He looks around the room before meeting my eyes. "Permission to speak freely?"

"Of course," I tell him, furrowing my brow. "You always have that with me, Robert."

He nods and takes a slow breath. "None of us knew he wasn't to become Alpha. He never mentioned his sister once. He's sick f**k. He'd torture his sister if it got him something he wanted."

I sigh, leaning my head back and staring at the ceiling. "You can't tell Calvin. I get it, I do, but he may do something stupid that gets her hurt more than she already is."

"I know. I'll help however I can. Dorothy will be safe here."

I toss my notebook to him and stand. "Figure out what you can from this. I'm going to sleep for a bit, and you're the one who told Calvin we'd work it out."

He laughs. "Your normal room is open."

Normal room. We really do have one at this point. I've spent more time here than in the palace over the last year, and by the time we find Ada, I'll have barely been home. And that's assuming we're correct in our guess that Ada is his mate. If we find her and she isn't, he may destroy the entire pack where we locate her.

I tug my clothes off and climb into bed, setting an alarm for a few hours. I'll be lucky if Calvin lets me sleep that long.

Napped, showered, and dressed, I return to Robert's office and find him huddled over the conference table with Calvin and Dorothy.

"It's about time you showed up," Calvin mutters, not looking away from the map on the table.

I take a deep breath. He's worried, I remind myself. Don't punch the kid. The kid can kill you. "Some of us didn't sleep last night."

"So, Dorothy told us that she ran from Silver Moon to Pine Forest pack before being caught," Robert tells me, straight to business. "The Alpha at Pine Forest wasn't willing to hide her since he was so close to her home and didn't want a war with Worm Moon, but he allowed her passage."

I nod. "So the Alpha at Pine Forest would have felt her enter Glowing Rocks."

"Yes, but he wouldn't necessarily believe she stayed there," he continues. "Depending on what he told Anthony, if they even spoke, he may believe she went to the Rogue land."

I join them at the map, though I know where it all is, it does help to look. "Perhaps we can spread the word that she's with Albert."

He shrugs. "Does it matter? I'll keep her safe here. Anthony is vicious, but if he comes for her, his pack is small. He'd have to team up with many other packs to stand a chance."

"It's a possibility," Dorothy says. "Many were upset my father was making me Alpha over my brother."

"Then let them come," he says, unconcerned. I'm struck again by just how much he's like his father, like my old friend. Both of them have never been afraid to do what was right.

"Calvin is adamant you check Worm Moon," she says, giving me a sad smile. She doesn't think she's there, either. "Anthony won't let you in. You'll have to go around, make a show of searching for your mate, and then ask. Still, he may not allow it."

"That was my thought as well," I tell her. "If it's the last place, we can bring Seth, and he won't be able to refuse it, but if he DOES have her, it could put her in more danger."

Calvin's hands are balled into fists again. "Then what exactly do you propose?"

I sigh, placing my finger back on the map. "We can cross Pine Forest and then into Silver Moon. I ordered Alpha Adrian and his Luna not to tell anyone we'd left as we did and to forget Dorothy was ever there. It will look as if we went there next. We can cross Silver Moon, Northern Woods, and Eclipse before arriving at Pink Moon."

"Why Pink Moon?" Calvin asks, following the line I'd made on the map.

"That's where my mate is from," I tell him. "Her brother is the Alpha now. I've already called him, and he's searching for information on that side of the kingdom."

He looks up, meeting my eyes. "You trust him?"

"I do," I tell him and realize he doesn't know. "You've met him, Calvin. He was here for the battle with Jacob. Austin."

He nods, finally realizing. "Elsie's mate?"

"Yes."

"Does she know?" he asks.

"I'm not sure," I say. "I didn't talk to her, but Austin may have. Is that a problem?"

He shakes his head. "No, I like her. He seemed nice enough. I didn't realize he was Mrs. Audrey's brother."

I smile at him. "He is. We can have Audrey meet us there, and it won't be odd for us to stay there longer. He is. We can gather more information and reevaluate. I know you'll want to take the shortest distance, but this is the safest path for us to continue searching for your mate without anyone realizing it has turned into a search for Ada."

"Think you can deal with that?" Dorothy asks with a slight smirk. "It's a lot of dressing up."

He nods. "I can do that. I'll do anything to get to her."