

Chapter 8

Calvin

I've attempted to tie this bow tie a dozen times now, but I can't get it. "Stupid f****g tie," I mutter as I throw it on the bed. I'm fairly sure Peter is just using this ball to try to distract me from the burning need to bond and protect my mate.

It started a year ago. Did whatever is happening to her start then, or is she that young? I sigh. I'd hoped she wasn't young, but even if she is, I need to bond her and get her somewhere safe. She can reject me if she wants. I'm sure she doesn't want to be mated to someone as old as I am, but she can do that once she's safe.

Peter knocks at the door, and I open it more forcefully than I mean to. "Easy. What's going on?"

"This damn tie," I mutter. "And I don't want to be here."

He sighs as he lifts the tie. "I know, but what if we're wrong about it, and she's here somewhere? Alpha Adrian has also approved for us to go through their dungeon in the morning."

I grunt as he moves behind me,ipping my collar up to tie it. "She's not here. I can just feel it."

He situates the tie, nudging me toward the mirror as he remains behind me. "Long side over the short. Bring it over and up. Pull it tight, then move it over your shoulder. Bring the small end up and make the shape while you pinch the middle. Bring the long one over, wrap it around, and go under the back. Pull it through, and be sure not to let go of the front till it's in."

"Oh, is that all?" I drawl as I reach up to try to straighten it now that he's tied it for me.

"I'm not going to even bother telling you to have a good time," he tells me, walking around to face me. "But it would be helpful if you could at least be polite. In the end, your behavior reects on Molly."

I sigh. He knows I'll do anything for my sister, and it's honestly unfair. "Fine."

"Find a pretty girl and dance with her," he tells me.

"I don't want to."

"Do it anyways," he shrugs.

I follow him from the room, and we make our way down the hall. I wasn't expecting much as this pack isn't as wealthy as the others I've visited, but I'm surprised when we enter the room. There are so many people, and they are all dressed so elegantly. The room has tables set with what looks like expensive plates and a million forks. f**k me.

"Just smile," Peter whispers as we walk in. I hear him, but I refuse.

"Calvin, right?" the Alpha asks as he approaches, his hand outstretched. I nod and take his hand. "I'm Alpha Adrian. This is my Luna, Grace. Welcome to Glowing Rocks Pack."

I nod to her in recognition, but I don't say anything. I don't want to meet his Luna.

"You're Queen Molly's brother, correct?" Grace asks me.

"Yes," I answer, not wanting to talk any more than I have to.

Peter pats my shoulder and hands me a glass of bourbon before walking away with the Alpha.

"Wow, I'd love to hear all about where you were," she says,ipping her hair over her shoulder. "And didn't King Peter kill your brothers? This must be so difficult for you," she says, grasping my arm as she pushes her chest into it.

Goddess. She's a mated shewolf, and her mate is in the room. I bring the glass to my lips and tilt the entire thing back. She's pathetic. I'm about to go bond another drink when a young girl approaches carrying a tray.

"I can take that, sir," she says.

I nod, but the Luna steps in before I can give it to her. "You're not allowed to speak in this room, Omega."

"She's ne," I say, stepping around her and leading the poor girl away.

"I'm sorry," she whispers. "You just didn't look for me, and I thought you didn't know where to put it."

I shake my head. Why is she apologizing? "I didn't know. Can you take me to the kitchen? I'd like to speak with you."

She looks terried but nods and leads me out of the room and down a staircase. An older gentleman turns when we enter and looks terried. "Sir?"

"Hi, I'm Calvin. I'm the Queen's brother. Does the Luna here ever hit anyone?"

"Pardon?" the man asks as everyone else walks away from us.

"The way she spoke to that girl," I try to explain. "I'm looking for my mate, and I have reason to believe she's being abused by someone."

He shakes his head at me. "Luna Grace appreciates the class status, but she's not violent. I don't believe she would abuse anyone."

I sigh. I had hoped that it would be easier than this. "Thank you," I tell him.

"You're really the Queen's brother?"

"I am," I tell him with a nod and a smile.

"I worked with her a few times in their kitchen while she was training," he tells me. "She wasn't Queen then, but she was a real nice girl."

I smile at that. "She still is. Do you mind if I sniff around for a bit, just in case I'm wrong and my mate is here somewhere?"

"Of course, Sir," he says with a slight bow of his head. "Take as long as you need."

I walk around, careful not to step into anyone's way. There are quite a few shewolves here, but I don't catch the scent of my mate. I'm about to leave when I spot a gorgeous blonde toward the back of the kitchen and move closer to smell better.

She's small but well-built. She's muscular and looks like she's trained quite a bit, which is strange since she's in the kitchen. She has blonde, curly hair and hazel eyes and blushes furiously when our eyes meet.

"Can I help you?" she asks as she walks toward me carrying a tray.

Shit. I think I scared her. "No, sorry," I tell her, stumbling over my words slightly. "I'm just hunting my mate. Haven't found her yet, though."

"Hunting?" she smiles at me, and she's somehow even more beautiful as she looks at me from head to toe. "I doubt you'll bond her down here with the Omegas. The Beta has a daughter. That's where you should be."

She continues past me with the tray, a few others joining her as they head upstairs. Her words stop me, though. Another who thinks I'll be mated to someone higher up. Someone who comes from wealth. Someone who will have grand expectations of me. Every moment that passes with my search leaves me sure that I'll be rejected when I nally bond her.

I return upstairs, heading to the table with Peter, but I hear Luna Grace and Alpha Adrian speaking with him and pause.

"He shouldn't be down there with the help," Grace says in a hushed tone.

"He is an Alpha," Adrian tells Peter. "There is nothing for him down there. If his mate IS an omega, he will need to reject her quietly and take another."

"He is not an acting Alpha," Peter tells them calmly. "You forget your place. I am royal. We believe more than any other wolves that the Goddess does not make mistakes."

Grace looks horried. "A weak Luna would bring him down."

"She would not," Peter defends. "You forget that your Queen did not have a wolf when she was marked."

Adrian leans forward, looking at Peter. "He could have rejected her."

"He would have abdicated the throne," he reminds him, his voice like knives. "He was in love with her the moment he saw her. There was no chance of a rejection. Again, the Goddess does not make mistakes."

I can't believe he would say that about Molly. Does he not like her? Would he have turned on the crown if Molly hadn't freed her wolf?

I casually take my seat, leaving the Luna with a horried look on her face. She doesn't know how much I heard, and she is afraid.

Peter looks at me with a questioning look, and I shake my head. He nods once, no words ever exchanged. She's not here, but I can't get the blonde girl from downstairs out of my mind. There is just SOMETHING about her.

Even if she is an omega, who is this Luna to decide? No doubt she's not his fated mate, given how they feel about class status. She glances back down at me, and as much as I wanted to tell her to f**k off and call Molly, I decide to release the alpha aura that Peter asked me to keep contained.

Both of them turn to look at me slowly as I take a sip of wine, not bothering to say one single word. I heard it all, and I could kill the Alpha right now and take his pack if I wanted. They need to remember that.

Quite an appropriate use of your aura. You're learning. Peter tells me through the link, causing me to smirk.