

## Chapter 7 The Pup I Must Hide - Luna Forsaken |

Arya's POV

James stared at me like the room had shifted.

His face shut down, then his jaw set, like he was already doing the maths.

"No," he said, sharp. "You can't be."

I blinked, still shaking. "I... what?"

"You can't. The healer said you couldn't," he repeated, like he could erase it by refusing it. I waited for anything else. A flicker of joy. A lie dressed as joy. Something.

Instead, he looked at my stomach like it was a bomb.

My throat tightened. "James... I'm telling you. Lesley confirmed it."

His eyes snapped up. "Why nows?"

The question hit like a slap.

I recoiled. "What?" "Why now?" he demanded. "When we are about to join the Union. When we are about to stabilize the pack. Why now?"

My mouth fell open.

I stared at him, stunned into silence for a beat too long.

Then I whispered, "That's your first question? This baby is a miracle, something we thought we'd never have and that is all you have to say? The union, your plan? Is more important than our child? So all those things you said to me about us being a family. About me having your pups were all lies?"

James dragged a hand through his hair, pacing once, sharp footsteps, jaw clenched so tight I could see the muscle jumping.

"This is the wrong time," he said, voice low and furious, like my pregnancy had betrayed him personally. "Do you understand that?" Even like this, tense, furious, he was still unfair to look at. That same face that used to make me forgive him too fast.

I swallowed hard. "It's our child."

"And if Marcel finds out," he snapped, cutting me off, "he might end the alliance."

The room went cold.

I stared at him. "That's what you're thinking about."

"Yes," he said without hesitation. "Because I have to think about it. Because I have to think about the pack. I have to think about our safety, Arya. My life, your life."

My hands went to my belly again. Protective. Instinctive.

James saw it and flinched like the gesture annoyed him.

"We're close," he said, stepping toward me. "We're few steps away from securing protection and you," He stopped, breathed once, forced his voice calmer.

"We can't keep it," he said, and the words sounded like they hurt him to say.

"James..."

"Arya. Listen. If Marcel finds out, he'll pull out. If he pulls out, we're dead. All of us."

The world tilted.

My blood turned to ice.

"You want me to," My voice cracked. "You want me to kill my baby."

James's face tightened with impatience.

"Don't make it sound like that. It's early," he said, voice tight. "It's, Arya, it's early."

"What! Are you crazy?!" My voice rose, broken. "What did my baby do?" I choked. "What did I do?" He exhaled sharply. "Arya,"

"Aren't I your mate?" I demanded, tears spilling now, hot and unstoppable. "You used to say it like a vow. You used to kiss my mark like it meant something holy." "Yes," he snapped back, "and that is exactly why you'll do this."

I stared at him in disbelief.

He moved closer, voice low, controlling.

"You can't keep it," he said. "Not now. Not when we're this close. Now that we know you can get pregnant we can always have another one"

I shook my head, trembling. "No."

His jaw clenched. "You have to abort it."

The word landed like a punch.

Abort.

His throat worked like he hated himself for saying it.

He reached for my face , not gentle, not cruel , just desperate.

"Arya... please. Don't make us lose everything."

I laughed, one sharp, cracked sound, because if I didn't, I would scream.

"You want an abortion," I whispered, wiping my face with shaking hands. "For the Union."

James didn't deny it. He stepped closer again, eyes flat.

"If Marcel walks away, we die. All of us. If that's what it takes to keep our people alive, to keep us alive" he said, "then yes."

My chest heaved. "I would rather we end this."

James's eyes narrowed. "What?"

"I'd rather we end this," I repeated, voice shaking but firm, "and split the pack than abort my child."

For a second, he looked genuinely shocked.

Then his face hardened into something colder than I'd ever seen on him.

He moved fast.

One step.

Two.

And suddenly I was backed into the wall, his body boxing me in, his hands braced on either side of me like a cage.

"They won't follow you," he said, and it wasn't cruel, just certain. "Not when they think this is their only chance."

I stared at him, tears still pouring, my stomach turning with fear and rage.

“What did you just say to me?”

He leaned closer, eyes dark. “Look around, Arya. They’re tired. They’re exhausted. They’re sick of fighting battles just to stay alive. Joining the Union is their only hope.”

His words came like stones.

“No one will risk their neck simply because you’re hurt,” he continued. “You think they’ll choose you over protection? You think they’ll choose your feelings over survival?”

“My feelings?” I gasped. “James, this is our child.”

“And this is our pack,” he snapped back. “Our people.”

I shook my head, sobbing. “You’re choosing them over me.”

“I’m choosing all of us,” he hissed. “I promised I won’t neglect you. I will love you. I will treat you like my Luna. I won’t touch Leah. Do you understand? I won’t touch her.”

I laughed again, ugly, broken. “How generous.”

He pressed his forehead to mine for half a second, like muscle memory.

“You’re my mate,” he whispered. “Don’t forget that. But you will end this pregnancy.” He cupped my cheek, thumb brushing once, muscle memory, like he forgot for half a second that he was hurting me.

James’s eyes flashed, but he forced his tone back down, like he was talking to someone irrational.

“This is politics,” he said. “You need to understand that and work with me. Please Arya,”

“And Leah’s baby?” I spat, voice shaking. “Is that politics too?”

His mouth tightened.

“That baby isn’t mine,” he said, clipped. “It’s... her mess. I’m just the cover they need.” I stared at him, bile rising.

“You want me to believe that,” I whispered. “You want me to believe she’s carrying some stranger’s child and you’re... what, saving her?”

“Yes,” he snapped. “Because that’s what Marcel wants. Because that’s what secures the alliance.”

My tears kept falling. I couldn’t stop them.

I raised my hand and slapped him.

The sound cracked through the room.

James's head turned slightly from the impact.

Then he looked back at me, eyes colder than before.

I slapped him again.

Then my hand stopped working because I started shaking too hard.

My palms stung. My chest burned. My throat felt raw.

"Don't," I sobbed, each hit punctuated by a word. "Don't, don't, don't, "

James caught my wrists mid-swing, gripping tight enough to stop me but not enough to bruise, like he still wanted to pretend he was gentle.

"Arya," he said, voice low and controlled, "enough."

I jerked against him, shaking, desperate, furious.

He held my hands pinned between us while I broke apart.

My sobs turned violent, ugly, humiliating.

He watched me like I was a storm he needed to contain.

Then he spoke, calm as a verdict.

"Lesley will come tomorrow," he said, calm as a decision already signed. "She'll take care of it."

My body went still.

Tomorrow.

He had already decided. Already scheduled it. Already turned my baby into an inconvenience to be handled like a wound to be cauterised.

"You're going to force me," I whispered.

His expression didn't change.

“I’m going to save this pack And you’re going to let this happen,” he said, voice going flat. “Because I’m not losing this pack and I am not losing you.”

Something inside me shattered completely.

I tried to pull away again, but he held me there, firm, unmovable, Alpha strength, Alpha certainty.

Not my mate.

Not my partner.

My warden.

And the worst part was he still looked like my James while he did it.

He tried to kiss me and I bit him. This wasn’t something he could solve with a kiss and a little tenderness. A lot of damage had been done.

I sagged against the wall, sobbing, hands trapped in his grip, stomach twisting with terror.

I knew then, he didn’t plan to let me go.

He didn’t plan to split the pack.

He didn’t plan to hand me my sweat, my labour, my years.

He planned to keep everything.

And keep me with it.

Because where would I go when my mate’s mark is on my throat and everyone can smell it?

Where would I go when the bond would drag me back to him even if I ran?

A pregnant rogue was a target with a heartbeat.

A death sentence.

I stared at him through tears, my voice barely there.

“You know I have nowhere to go,” I whispered.

James didn’t answer.

He didn't have to.

The silence told me he knew.

And he was using it.