2 - Small Blessings

I had no clue what to do, I wanted to run and scream but I couldn’t move. Would it be better or worse to catch them in the act?

I wanted to hear his explanation, of how he could do this to me.

I wanted him to feel the guilt to help diminish my anger. I wanted him to feel the regret to calm my betrayal. I wanted an explanation to wash away the shock and pain.

Before I could make up my mind he turned around to pull up his pants and saw me.

They both did.

He froze and called my name, she gave me a lazy grin.

And I ran.

“Willa, d.amnit, Willa.” He chased after me as I slammed the door behind us to our bedroom and dove under the covers.

“Willa.” He burst open the door as my tears fell.

I couldn’t think, couldn’t process, I just felt. And everything I felt was wrong.

The bed dipped as he sat next to me and placed a hand on my back.

“I-I,” He started, “I don’t know what to say.”

I waited for him to go on, as much as I wanted to yell and scream I wanted him to be the one that was begging for my forgiveness. I needed his explanation to make it okay.

The heavy warmth of his hand left me completely after a few silent moments.

“I’ll talk to you when you calm down.” He sighed and I felt the bed shift again.

He wasn’t going to leave? Was he?

The sound of the door closing was my answer.

The hole in my chest ripped wider and I couldn’t breathe.

But he didn’t come back.

I don’t know when I fell asleep but when I woke up he was next to me in bed. I felt a rush of relief but I wasn’t sure why. I just cuddled into the back of his broad back and let his strong warmth ease me back into the abyss.

He was up before I was, the dull thudding in my chest was threatening to rip open again. But he came back. For me.

I jumped into a shower and pulled a brush through my hair, my light green eyes seemed even brighter compared to how red-rimmed they were. I grimaced at my reection, there was no hiding what I spent all yesterday and last night doing.

I followed the sounds of muted chatter to the breakfast room. I paused at the door and my stomach dropped. I pushed past the open door hoping no one noticed me.

“Willa, honey?” I stopped in my tracks trying to loosen my fists that were clenched together.

I lingered in the doorway, there was so way in h.ell I was sitting with that b.itch.

Luna Natalie and Camilla were looking the picture of relaxed, just the two of them sitting for breakfast.

“Sorry, I can’t join you,” I f.orced a smile, hoping it seemed genuine, “I have-,”

“Oh your appointment, yes.” Luna Natalia smiled at me. Oh, I actually forgot I had that doctor's appointment.

I nodded and turned not sparing a glance toward Camilla, I knew it would be my undoing. Rage crept through me, the audacity of her sitting here after what she did with my mate.

I couldn’t focus on anything but my anger.

Two large hands wrapped around me stunning me for a moment before his familiar scent enveloped me.

“Come here,” He pulled me into an empty room.

I couldn’t stop shaking, hot tears sprung into my eyes, “Why?” I demanded of him before he could speak. I shook my head and the tears streamed down my face, I didn’t wipe them away, I wanted him to see what he did.

“I, uh,” He rubbed the back of his neck, he was rarely at a loss for words, “It shouldn’t have happened like that. It shouldn’t have. I am so sorry, you don’t deserve that.” He pinned me to the spot with his chocolate-brown eyes. My stomach doing a flip despite myself.

“I want her gone,” I demanded.

“Willa,” He breathed, “I can’t.”

“You can, she can come to your party but she is not permitted to stay here,” I mustered up the Luna voice I’ve been practicing, I was assuming that’s why she was here this morning.

“Okay,” He hung his head before lowering his mouth to mine. His kiss was reserved yet hungry, and he pulled me to him.

My breath caught, but I was enveloped in the sparks and warmth of the mate bond. I felt loose in his arms. I can’t remember the last time he kissed me like this outside of when we were intimate, if ever.

He pulled back and I put a hand to my swollen lips, the effect he still had on me made me dizzy.

“Now what?” I breathed.

He ran a hand through his dark hair, “I am sorry, I don’t even know. All of this everything that is happening, I guess I don’t feel like myself.”

Not really an explanation, but I wanted to believe him.

Willa, your appointment is about to start - The doctor's voice came through my mind with the mind link

“I have to go,” I paused, studying him, “To an appointment, we can talk later.”

He nodded, tucking a piece of my hair behind my ear, and I melted into his touch.

“I’m sorry, that wasn’t fair to you,” He whispered and I nodded, fighting the tears.

“I forgive you,”

The words felt wrong coming out. I didn’t know if he even asked for my forgiveness, I wanted more groveling but I didn’t want to lose him.

My lifetime love that was fated to me.

This was just a mistake that we would get past. It would make us stronger, and our love for each other more intense.

I could deal with the pain, there wasn’t an alternative.

“Well, Luna,” The middle-aged doctor who always seemed bubbly and full of energy sat across her desk, “Er, Willa, sorry.” She smiled at me.

I loved the title, it sent pride through me. To help protect the pack that I loved, that I grew up in alongside man that I always loved but never thought I could have.

“It’s okay, Dr. Lilian,” I smiled at her, “I’ll have to get used to it soon.”

“Very soon,” She nodded, her eyes sparkling before she flipped over my charts studying them.

Her eyes widened slightly before the smile returned to her face, “Very soon you will be called something else.”

My brows furrowed, “What?”

“Congratulations, Luna. You’re going to be a mother.”

I was rooted to my seat as it sunk in.

I looked down at my stomach letting out a laugh. I wanted this, we wanted this and it was finally happening.

A baby, we were going to have a baby.

I rubbed my stomach, there was a baby in there.

Tears pricked my eyes for another reason now.

“Really?” I asked.

“Yes,” Her smile wide, “Only a few weeks, I would say about five or six weeks, that's why it didn't show up yet when you were here last time, it must have happened days before." She mused.

"But I want you to come back next week and we can do a proper scan, maybe with Nolan. Okay?”

I nodded, “Thank you,” Joy flooded through me.

Everything was right again, better than right.

It was perfect.

Coming back from the pack clinic, I clutched the papers confirming my pregnancy close to my heart, I wanted nothing more than to tell him, it would be the perfect birthday gift. Even though his birthday was tomorrow the party was tonight and I figured it was close enough.

Walking into the packhouse the air was completely different from when I left. It felt charged, and people were running around, omegas with vases and small bites of food rushed around without dropping anything.

I didn’t understand, everything was already set up and decisions were made weeks ago.

Luna Natalie almost bumped into me.

“Oh,” Her eyes were wide seeing me, I shoved the papers into my pocket, “We’ve had a change, I’m glad you’re here.” That took me by surprise, she seemed to be happy to plan things herself saying it took her far less time than when I was involved.

“What can I do?” My smile was genuine, I was happy that she needed my help.

“I’ve told the omega’s to re-do the table settings in the dining hall, they’re cleaning it again now but I need you to monitor to make sure that they are doing it correctly. Perfectly,” She handed me a clipboard and tapped on the color swatches attached.

“We’re changing everything?” I asked, looking down at the swatches that were completely different from what we chose previously.

“Yes, the prince is coming,” She waved a hand dismissing me, I held back my laugh. A prince?

“What do you mean?”

“Have you not been paying attention in your studies, Wilhelmina?” Her brown eyes slid to mine, I flinched internally at the use of my full name.

“I have, and the royal family stopped holding power a century ago,” I countered.

She sighed, pinching the bridge of her nose as if I was giving her a headache.

“They don’t hold power really, yes. But they are still powerful, and we respect them and the bloodline they came from,” She sighed, “Alpha Dracos, the prince, has informed us he will be attending this evening, I’ve only met him once. Of course, he's invited to all of our pack events but he either declines or sends someone on his behalf.”

I nodded, still not understanding. If he didn’t hold power over us why bother with all the changes, and, oh Goddess, the fancy china that I definitely broke a few pieces of last time.

“If you have any questions link me, this has to be perfect,” She turned and walked away her heels clicking on the floor.

I sighed looking over all the changes, at least I wouldn’t have to set out the silverware and I could just direct it. This would keep my mind away from Camilla’s tones legs wrapped around my mate.

Anger flared again, that was in the past. The not-so-distant past, but I would focus on the future. I patted my pocket where I put the confirmation from the doctor and smiled at my flat stomach. The future, this baby, was the only thing that mattered now.

The day both dragged on was over before I knew it.

Dusk settled in past the tall windows of the dining room and I yawned, cursing myself for not asking if I was allowed to drink coffee or not. I saw it a lot in movies but I wasn’t sure how it affected us.

“Willa, what are you still doing here?” Luna Natalia slipped in, her hair and makeup perfect and done for this evening even though she had yet to change.

“I was just finishing here, we just have a few more centerpieces for the smaller tables,”

“I’ll do that, go get ready, it's going to start soon,” She grabbed the clipboard from my hand

and I let her. If I left before it was done I would have gotten in trouble, no matter what I did it was wrong and I've accepted that.

I would be Luna in a few months and I hoped the grip she had on me would lessen.

Significantly.

I hoped.

3 - Birthday Surprise

After a quick shower, I slipped on the floor-length silver dress that hugged my body perfectly. It was Nolan's favorite color and something I went back and forth deciding on wearing. I kept a few others from the rack that Luna Natalie sent me for this event, but I wanted to be seen tonight. The straps were thin and the back dipped down. It seemed like too much almost, and I struggled with who I was and who I wanted to be.

A soft knock came on the door and my heart thumped, I reached for the black gift box where I put the pregnancy results.

"May I come in?" A voice even more familiar than Nolan's came on the other side and I opened the door for my mother.

"Oh Willa," She looked up at me, "You are stunning,"

"Come in," I closed the door behind her.

"I figured you might want some help since Lola is out of town," She offered, motioning for me to sit in front of my vanity.

Lola was my closest friend since we met in middle school and we were inseparable since. Her family went on a trip every summer and as much as I wished she was here for this, I knew how much her family vacations meant to her. She would be back in a few weeks anyways and I would fill her in with all of my news. I smiled down at my stomach. But Nolan would be the one I told first, even before my mom, though I wanted to scream it with each passing second.

"Thank you," I sat down as my mom went to work on my hair while I tried to stay still and line my eyes and apply some shimmering eye shadow that matched my dress. I could never do it as well as Lola could, but tonight was about Nolan anyways, I doubt anyone would be looking at my eyeshadow.

"There," My mom brushed out my curls, my hair had a slight wave to it naturally but the soft curls added something to my look.

"One last thing," She opened up a velvet box she held, "I know you said this was about Nolan tonight but you're so close to becoming the Luna, I just, your dad and I are so proud of you."

She opened the box and took out a white gold hair comb strewn with diamonds and sapphires.

"Grandma's," I reached out to touch it but stopped.

"Yes," She nodded, "And now it's yours,"

I looked in the mirror, as she pinned some of my curls back behind my ear.

"Absolutely beautiful," She leaned her head on my shoulder before kissing the side of my head.

“Thank you,” I leaned into her.

“Now, we are going to be late, and we can’t have the honored guest's mate show up after it starts,” She said, sounding more like Luna Natalia.

I stood up grabbing a fur shawl from the closet, it covered my bare arms and the part of my back that was exposed, making this dress more comfortable for me to wear.

“I’ll see you in there,” She left to go to the dining room while I met Nolan and his parents in his dad's office.

“You look beautiful,” Nolan wrapped my hand around his arm, “Showing a bit too much skin for a future Luna though,” He murmured but it wasn’t s.exy. It seemed like he was chastising me for a dress that I didn’t even buy for myself.

“I thought-” I didn’t even know, I thought I was playing the pretty Luna, but apparently I chose the wrong one.

“There is a line between s.lutty and classy,” He brushed his lips across my ear and I shuddered at the contact, drowning out the hurt and confusion I felt.

We walked in followed by his parents, everyone in the dining hall stood up and clapped for their future Alpha.

I felt the swell of pride being on his arm as we walked past the rows of round tables up to the long table for the ranked members and honored guests.

I went to sit to his right.

“Scoot down one,” He whispered.

“What?” This was always the place that I sat at.

“The prince is coming,” He pulled the chair out and I stood moving one down.

I reached for the glass of champagne but pulled back reminding myself that a baby was in me, our baby.

Speeches were made and still the space between us was empty, but he didn’t ask me to move back down next to him. I was lost in thought as everyone rose, I didn’t even notice until Luna Natalie glared at me whispering my name.

Oh.

I stood a moment before a man sat in the seat between us. He looked at me and I nodded, looking past him to where Nolan sat.

Camilla was walking up to the head table and all eyes were on her.

Including his.

The man next to me might have said something but I didn’t hear it. All I could see was her walking up in a skin-tight black dress that flared out. It was strapless and her lips were lined in the deepest red.

She addressed the man next to me before smiling at me, her teeth pulling back over her blinding white teeth. I gave her a smirk that looked like a smile, knowing what I had laid out on the table in front of me, what was in that little black gift box that would wipe that smile from her face.

“The future Luna is a sight,” The man next to me nodded at Camilla as she passed.

“She’s not the future Luna,” I grasped my fork too tight.

“Oh, I-”

“I am,” I glared at him. His light blue eyes widened for a moment before they settled on me, studying my face.

“I meant no disrespect.”

I didn’t hear him after that, my attention turned to where Camilla leaned over the table to whisper to my mate. Nolan's eyes went wide as he pulled back but a smile graced his lips.

What the f.uck was he doing? He knew how this would make me feel, I was going to link him when the stranger spoke next to me.

“I always, hated these things they seem so formal, so forced.”

“Then what would you prefer?” I asked him not taking my eyes off Nolan’s.

“Something small, intimate, with people I actually enjoyed being around.”

I nodded, “That sounds like a h.ell of an idea, just one not suited to tank members and their air for showing off. Also, what would the Lunas do then? Die from boredom most likely,” I mused and the man next to me laughed, it boomed and it caught Nolan’s attention along with his mother and father.

I stared at them all with a smile on my face.

Camilla moved away from the table finally, only to come around to sit next to Nolan on his other side. People actually moved so that Nolan could pull up a chair for her.

Anger surged a real thing that I could hold onto. How dare she?

What was Nolan thinking? I know he was being polite but this crossed a line.

I scooted next to him as soon as the man left with his apologies to Nolan and his parents. After he left, most others left leaving the ranked members and a few stragglers including my parents behind.

Camilla smiled at Nolan so genuinely that I wanted nothing more than to wipe it off of her mouth. I knew that I should share this with him out of joy but this was too perfect of an opportunity to pass up.

My spite and joy were keeping the same company this evening.

“Your gift,” I slid it to him smiling, “I wanted to give it to you earlier, but.” I shrugged, chewing on my bottom lip.

He looked at me curiosity evident on his face as he opened the box and pulled out the paper. My stomach filled with butterflies as he read it, I couldn’t wait for his reaction.

This is something we both wanted but it hadn’t happened until now. It felt like perfect timing. The Moon Goddess blessed us with a baby months before we would take over the pack, ensuring the Alpha’s line.

“Willa?” He looked at me, hurt flashed in his eyes momentarily before he locked his jaw, “I wish we could have done this privately.”

My stomach clenched, did it matter? No one else knew, he didn’t even announce it.

“I Nolan Hemming future Alpha of the Blue Ridge Pack Reject you, Willa, er Wilhelmina Balfour as my mate and future Luna.”

I didn’t understand his words but my body did.

Pain rippled through me as I felt our bond start to snap. I couldn’t breathe. Fire sparked through me replacing my blood.

I swear this was the end. I would die from this. My vision blurred and went black.

Angry shouts and warm familiar hands lifted me up. My eyes blinked open as I was drawn away from the table.

The last thing I saw before I drifted back into agonizing darkness was Camilla comforting my mate through the pain.