

Forsaken by the Moon Goddess

Chapter 3: Uncle Roman

Sloane

I somehow made it through another day of school. I can't wait for graduation. One more month, then I'm free.

Of course, that also means that Slade will be on his own in high school, but I have to hope that Uncle Roman will work with him enough over the summer that he'll be able to defend himself once I'm gone.

As soon as I get in the backseat of the car and see Uncle Roman's disapproving glance in the rearview mirror, I know that Principal Rollins called him.

"You want to tell me what happened today, Sloane?"

I don't look at Slade who is in the front seat. I don't want Uncle Roman to know that I keep getting in trouble because he's being bullied at school. I can't help what happens next year, but for now, I'm more than capable of keeping it between me and Slade.

"Some Beta got mouthy with me, and I taught him a lesson," I say, not at all sad that Beta Louis had to have his nose reset before going home. I wonder if he told his father that it was Sloane Hartwell who broke it, or if he made up some lame excuse about tripping and falling.

Uncle Roman sighs an exhausted sigh. "Sloane ..."

"Don't worry, Uncle Roman. I didn't kill anyone, and in a month, you won't have to worry every time your phone rings on a school day," I say, not wanting to hear it for the hundredth or maybe the millionth time.

He twists, putting his arm on the back of Slade's seat and turning all the way around to look at me.

"You know I love you, right? You know Aunt Samara loves you?" he asks me.

I do know. I know they've never treated me any differently than they've treated their own pups. They offered to give me their name, which I accepted. They told me that I could call them mom and dad, but I've never been able to do that.

"I know," I say softly, looking out the window.

"If you ever need to talk ..." he begins.

"I'm good."

I glance at Slade, who gives me the look like he wants to tell them the truth, but I subtly shake my head before looking back outside.

"You're a strong wolf, Sloane, but you can't take on the world."

Yeah? Well, maybe the world should stop trying to take me on. Maybe then I wouldn't have to put on such a tough exterior all the time.

On the ride back to the pack, I vaguely listen to Uncle Roman talking to Slade. Instead, I wonder why Benedict Winslow is suddenly showing an interest in me. Why the hell was he asking what I was doing this weekend? It's not like him to try and embarrass me. Up until now, that hasn't been his style and he almost seemed ... hurt that I didn't jump when he wanted to talk to me.

For some reason, he always seems to be around when Slade is being bullied and I'm punching some asshole's lights out because of it.

And I catch him watching me. A lot.

I snort. Maybe I should just spar with him and help him get it out of his system.

"What's funny, Sloane?" Uncle Roman asks. He doesn't miss much, I'll give him that.

"What do you know about the Winslow family?" I ask.

"The Winslows?" I'm thankful that he's driving. If he wasn't, I'm sure his gaze would be intent on me. "They are very well established in the werewolf community, they are a powerful family, although not as powerful as we are."

I know a lot of our pack's power comes from Aunt Samara. She has a white wolf like my mother did, all the way up until she murdered her mate, my father, because she didn't think he was ever going to have a pack. Apparently, the most important thing to my mother was being a Luna. She even betrayed her wolf,

causing her to lose the blessing of the Moon Goddess and making her a regular wolf, just like every other she-wolf. Just like me.

Aisling whimpers in my mind again.

‘It’s not you, Ais. I told you that. You deserve so much better. You deserve to have the stature that comes from being a white wolf. I just wish I could have given that to you,’ I tell her.

I don’t blame my wolf at all. I put the blame right where it belongs, on my mother. She did this. She ruined our legacy. My mother and Aunt Samara were the last of the white wolves, she-wolves descended from a pure line of Alphas. White wolves were well thought of and much desired as mates. Since my father was an Alpha, unfortunately born from a mistress rather than a mate, I technically should carry the white wolf gene. But because my mother betrayed the mate bond, killing my father, the Moon Goddess punished her. And apparently the sins of the mother are passed to the daughters.

I’m thankful that my sister Aria was too young when our mother died to understand the legacy that she should have been born with. She’s been raised to believe that she, like me, will have a wolf that is a regular wolf. However, I was only a year younger than she is now when our mother died. I knew about my mother’s legacy and expected to have a white wolf. But apparently, that line will only pass through Aunt Samara’s daughters from now on.

“Is there a reason you’re asking about the Winslows?” Uncle Roman asks.

“Benedict Winslow is in my class. He asked what I was doing this weekend and I was trying to decide if he was being nice or if he was trying to embarrass me.”

I watch my uncle’s eyes narrow in the rearview mirror, and I realize I’ve probably said too much. I don’t tell my aunt and uncle much about what goes on in school. There’s not a lot they can do about it and in truth, it would only make my life more difficult if they tried to step in.

“Is Benedict harassing you,” Uncle Roman growls.

“No. No, it’s nothing like that. I just ...”

I just what? Why did I fucking ask about him?

“He’s never shown an interest in me before, so I’m not sure why he’s suddenly trying to strike up a conversation with me now.”

“Did you talk to him?” he asks me.

“No. I told him to go find someone who was interested in swooning over him because I’m not,” I say, staring out the window again and thinking of Christa inviting him to her birthday party. As if she’d ever be worthy of being mated to Benedict. She’s as fake as they come, spending more time primping in front of a mirror than studying. She’s got the personality of a rock and about the same IQ.

“I don’t remember hearing that he’s been on your hit list in the past,” Uncle Roman says. I glance at him wondering if he’s keeping track of all the ranked members I’ve punched. Knowing my uncle, he probably is.

“No, that’s why I was surprised when he tried to talk to me today. He usually keeps his distance.”

“Well, from what I’ve heard, Benedict understands the legacy he’s about to walk into. He started attending pack meetings with his father in preparation to take over after he turns eighteen. I don’t know what he’s like at school or as a man, but in my interactions with him as an Alpha, I’ve been impressed,” Uncle Roman says. That’s high praise coming from my uncle.

We pull up to the packhouse and he turns around to look at me again. “So, maybe don’t break his nose until you know for sure that he’s being an asshole, okay?”

I grin at my uncle. “No promises,” I say before getting out.

He shakes his head, but I swear I see the hint of a smile on his face. My uncle has always indulged my need to be strong and even after I started getting in trouble at school, he didn’t stop training me to be a powerful warrior. Now, only he and Aunt Samara are strong enough to take on me and Aisling.

“Dad!” Aria and Theo yell, racing out of the packhouse to come greet us. He easily scoops both of them into his arms.

“How are my pups?” he asks, hugging them fiercely.

I smile. This is what a family should look like. This is what MY family should have looked like.

Aunt Samara is waiting for us on the patio.

“Welcome home, Slade. How was school?” she asks.

“Fine,” he says with the grumpiness of a teenager.

Aunt Samara takes it with a grain of salt and turns to me. “And you, Sloane? How was your day?” she asks. I can tell that she knows about my altercation with the Beta asshole, so I go for grumpy teenager as well.

“Fine.”

Rather than letting me pass like she let Slade, she pulls me into a hug.

“You know I’m here if you ever want to talk,” she whispers.

I nod, hugging her back. Her clean, fresh scent always helps to calm me.

When I pull away, she looks at me to make sure I know she’s serious before looking past me at Uncle Roman. “Hello, my mate.”

“Hello gorgeous.”

I don’t wait to hear them kissing. I know it’s coming, so I head inside.

“Oh Sloane? You’re grandfather Waylon is coming to visit this weekend.”

Great, just what I didn’t want. My biological father’s father coming for a visit.